

# LETTERS AND ESSAYS,

On several

## SUBJECTS:

*Philosophical, Moral, Historical,  
Critical, Amorous, &c.*

In Prose and Verse.

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T O  
John Dryden, Esq; } } Mr. Congreve,  
Geo. Granvill, Esq; } } A N D  
Walter Moile, Esq; } } Mr. Denis;

And other Ingenious Men of th' Age.

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*By several Gentlemen and Ladies.*

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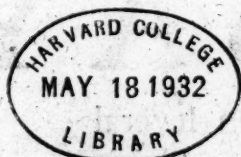
L O N D O N,

Printed, and are to be Sold by *Daniel Browne*  
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and *Tho. Axe*, at the *Blew Ball* in *Duck-*  
*Lane.* 1697.



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*Welsh fund*

*Compiled by Charles Gilden*

**TO THE**  
**HONOURABLE**  
**Sir JOHN TRENCHARD,**  
**Their Majesties Principal Sec-**  
**retary of State. And one**  
**of the Lords of their Maje-**  
**sties most Honourable Privy**  
**Council.**

*Honour'd Sir,*  
**I** am so far from being Apprehen-  
sive of the Censure of any *think-*  
*ing* Man, for Dedicating a Book  
of this Nature to a Man of your *Sta-*  
*tion*, that I'm satisfyed I shou'd have in-  
jur'd your Merit in choosing any o-

## *The Epistle Dedicatory:*

ther Patron for That, in which the Glory of the ENGLISH NATION is in some Degree defended: for tho' I confess the *States Man* (according to our Modern Notion) has little to do with the ensuing Discourses; yet I'm very sure the TRUE ENGLISH MAN (a Name I know you far more value) most extremely interest you in them; for the *Patriot's* Zeal ought to extend to the *Glory*, as well as *Happy-ness* of his Country: so that you must be pleas'd to shelter with your Protection, a Piece that aims at a Vindication of our known RIGHT and HONOUR, which are impiously invaded, and as weakly, as ignobly betray'd to a *Foreign People*, by a bigotted Veneration for a former Age. But *Poetry*, Sir, will appear from the following *Essays*, to be a Prize we ought no more to surrender to *Foreign*

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## *The Epistle Dedicatory*

Nations than our *Courage* or *Liberty*.  
For *Greece* and *Rome*, who have given us the noblest Examples of the Latter, have been the most famous for the Former. And as we are not inferior to either of those *Common-Wealths*, in the Honor of *Arms*, or the Wisdom of our *Laws*, so I can never yield them the precedence in *Poetry*.

Nor is this *Glory* I plead for; a meer Noitious *Fantoms*, which affords no Benefit to the *Public*, as is evident from its very *Nature* and *Design*, as well as the Authority of the Wisest Nations; who have Esteem'd *POETS* very necessary, as well as very Honourable Members of the *Common-Wealth*. This *Athens* thought, when on the loss of *Eupolis* in a Sea Fight, she decreed that no *Poet* shou'd for the future, ever venture himself in the

## *The Epistle Dedicatory.*

War, least by one Fatal Blow, a Treasure should be lost, an Age could not repair, for POETS were not born ev'ry Day.

But this Veneration which Greece paid the Poets, is built on the innate Excellence of their Art. *Pleasure* is the Sovereign Aim of all Men, 'tis that which the *Soul* naturally and justly desires, and for which 'tis made, and what the greatest *Stoic* pursues; for 'tis impossible for any Man to desire *Pain*. Now *Poetry* do's not only make *Pleasure*, its *Medium* but its *Aim*, and so employs the surest Means to obtain the noblest *End*. Majestic and delightful Numbers, surprizing and noble Thoughts, and Charming Expressions, awake all the Faculties of the *Soul*, to receive the *Mighty Lessons* it imparts, which all terminate in the most *Solid*, and *Rational Pleasure*.  
For



## *The Epistle Dedicatory*

For they either establish some *Virtue* by a great *Example*, or by the same, punish some *Vice*, or ridicule, and lash some *Folly*, that may be injurious to our *Happiness*; the Establishment of which on the Basis of *Virtue* and *Wisdom*, fixes us in the sweet *Enjoyment* of the *Greatest* and most lasting of *Pleasures*.

As a farther *Proof* of *Poetry's*, being a Friend to, and promoter of *Virtue*; and an Enemy to *Vice*, 'tis observable, that all the *Heroes* and Men of *Virtue* of Antiquity lov'd and encourag'd *Poetry*, and that the worst of *Princes*, and greatest *TYRANTS* always persecuted, and hated the *Poets*, as their known and most dangerous Enemies, for they won'd spare no *Vice* in the most powerful Offenders. *Lucan* fear'd not in the time of the greatest Tyrant of the *Cæsars*, to extoll *Cato*

## The Epistle Dedicatory.

the most obstinate Stickler for his Country's Liberty against the first of 'em; and he chooses rather to condemn Providence for the success, the destroyers of the Liberty of Rome met with, than not praise Cato for dying with his falling Country. *Victrix causa dijs placuit, sed Victa Catoni.* The POETS indeed have been the bold Persecutors of Vice in all Ages, and have ever rewarded Virtue with Immortality. They are beneficial to Posterity, by conveying to it the most prevailing Motives Illustrious Examples, so that he that is a generous Patron of the MUSES, is a Benefactor to Ages to come, as well as to the Present.

*Carmin amat quisquis, Carmine Digna gerit.*  
is a certain Truth; For the very Motives for performing Vertuous Actions, hold for the care of those that make them eternal, viz. the good of Others,  
the

## *The Epistle Dedicatory.*

the *public Benefit*. To which Sir, your whole Life and Endeavours having been zealously applyed, I cannot doubt but you will by your patronizing *Poetry*, compleat the noble end of your *Honourable Ambition*. Then may Posterity see in YOU, Sir, such a pattern of *Fortitude, Temperance, Wisdom, Justice, Bounty*, and all other Virtues that make a Man truly Great, that copying You alone, wou'd make e'm all *Happy and Good*. I'm too unskilful a Dawber to dare to venture on drawing so noble an Image, as both your private and public Life compose. I can never reach up to that Generous Constancy to your Friends in the midst of your *Sufferings*, which has to my knowledge rais'd some to Wealth, if not Content. How can I ever hope to give the least Idea of your present Character, when your Love for the Public Good transports you from private Repose to Business,

DOXLEY

## *The Epistle Dedicatory.*

Business, and the fatigues of State, that more, than those only, whom you know, may share in the Blessings of your Administration.

An ungenerous Self-interest, separate from the *Public Good*, has been observ'd to prevail over most *Statesmen*, which made the World put such a vast distinction betwixt the *Statesman* and the *Patriot*, as to make 'em irreconcilable; but You, Sir, contradict so general an Observation, since we all agree, that in you the *Patriot* and *Statesman* are eminently united. Your Soul is too Large, too Noble, to be wretchedly confin'd to so narrow a Game, as the Chase of your own private Happiness, without regard to the public; or rather you are so True an *English-man*, that you cannot be Happy, unless your Country be so too; and 'tis not your own private Stores, but the Public that gives you Content; for your Goodness is exalted



## The Epistle Dedicatory

exalted so near to Perfection, that it cannot but be communicative; we are so sensible of this, that we ~~unanimously~~ with your Power to do Good, were as boundless, as we know your Will. We might then hope a long wish'd Union in those Minds, whose Variance with each other has produc'd a common Misery; and till that be effected, we have alas! but little Hopes of any ~~secul'd~~ Happiness. But what is worst, there is but small prospect of that, till Men have learn'd your Virtue, Sir, of sacrificing all private Designs and Interests to the public Good.

But I have unawares falln into a Contemplation of your Virtues, which I dare not persue; but as the Painter, who after he had given to the several Figures of his Picture, the various forms and expressions of Grief, drew a Veil over the Father's Face, as unable to express his: So, Sir, ought I, having given

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## *The Epistle Dedicatory.*

venia View of some part of: your Mer-  
its, to leave the rest to the Imagination  
of the Reader; better inform'd by your  
*known Reputation*. I have said enough  
to make all Men admire, and love you,  
that do not know you; and it must be  
the Defect of my Abilities, if they stop  
on this side the highest and most Aw-  
ful Veneration. However I have this  
Comfort, that I have rais'd the *first Py-*  
*ramid* ( tho' a very poor one ) to your  
desert, to which greater Artists will in  
time build up more Glorious Monu-  
ments, when you shall declare your  
self, the Patron of the *Poetic Glory* of  
*England*, as you have been of her In-  
terest. And these Hopes makes me pre-  
sume to Dedicate not only this small  
Book to you, but also my self, and all  
the Endeavours of, Sir,

*Your most Humble,*

*And most Obedient Servant,*

CHARLES GILDON,

**T H E  
P R E F A C E.**

**T**Here is no Man, I think, doubts but that its Variety that composes the Regale of the Mind, as well as that of the Body, which has made me have a regard to that in the following Book; for I have intermixt things Historical, Moral, Amorous and Gallant, with the rougher Critical Discourses. Some will gratifie the Fancy, others the Judgment, or at least I design'd they shou'd. I shall not say much for that part of the Book which is none of mine, because that need no Defence; and I cannot urge much for the other, if the Reasons it contains be insufficient for its Justification.

In

## The Preface.

In the hurry of writing I forgot one  
very good Defence of a Passage in the  
Othello of Shakespear, which Mr. Ry-  
mer has loudly exclaim'd against, and  
which a very good Friend of mine advis'd  
me to insert in the Preface; 'tis this,

Awake what ho! Brabantio, &c.

An old black Ram is supping your white Ewe &c.

“ Mr. Rymer will have it, that a rap  
at the Door wou'd better express Jago's  
“ Meaning, than all that noise; but if  
“ Mr. Rymer wou'd consult the Reason  
“ of the thing he'll find, that the noise  
“ Roderigo and Jago made, contributed  
“ very much to their design of surpriz-  
“ ing and alarming Brabantio, by  
“ that, to transport him from Considera-  
“ tion to a violent Passion.

I am sorry, that a Man of Mr. Rymer's  
Learning shou'd be so bigotted to the An-  
tients, as to become an Enemy to the  
Honor

## The Preface.

Honor of his own Country in that thing, which is perhaps the only we can truly pretend to excel all others in, viz. Poetry. Courage, Virtue and Wisdom, Greece and ROME will never be out-Rival'd in, but I am apt to think they have both been out-done in Poetry by the English; and tho' the latter once subdu'd this Island, yet were she now in all her Glory, with all the Encouragements she gave her Poets, she wou'd confess her self conquer'd in Poetry.

For notwithstanding all those Encouragements Poets met with there, and the want of 'em here in England, we have the Honor to have more and better Poets than ever Greece or Rome saw. So that Poetry like a Tree, Transplanted to a foreign Clime, grew not, with all their Care and Cultivation, so kindly, as here without any. Poetry, being therefore our Native Right, I hope the moderate



## The Preface.

moderate Reader will excuse the Heat I  
sometimes run into in the Defence of it.

I hope too the Graver Gentlemen, the  
Precisians, will not be scandaliz'd at my  
Zeal for the Promotion of Poetry, because  
the Reason of it is, that 'tis observable  
from History, that the Decay and Neglect  
of that, always was a fatal Symptom of  
the Loss of Antient Virtue, Power and  
Glory.



A  
**COLLECTION**  
 OF  
**Miscellaneous Essays**  
 and Letters.

To **JOHN DRYDEN** Esq;

*May the 10th. 1693.*

**I** Hope, Sir, you'll not measure my Love and Value for you by the Visits I make you, for then you wou'd extreamly injure me; for I cannot be so impudent with a Man I have an awful Esteem for, as to intrude too often into his Company, for I'm sensible I can in no measure atone for the loss of that time, my Visits wou'd rob from your better Thoughts; and I rather satisfy my self with the expression of my Zeal and Love in absence, than, at the expence of my Friend, gratifie my own desire of his frequent Company. But yet, I confess, this long

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default

default of my Duty, can be excus'd by nothing, but the unavoidable business about my Concerns in the Country, which has divorc'd me as long from, what I value next you, my Books.

Mistake me not, Sir, I mean not my *Scribling*, which I'm far enough from valuing, and only comply with, by the compelling Obligation that taught the Parrot, *sum XAIPE*. Nay, I have so little of an Author, that I have not *Arrogance*, and want all *Self Esteem*, which some ev'n as dull as my self abound with beyond bearing; and which is, indeed, like a Wife, tho' an *Evil*, yet such a one that is necessary. For a *Diffidence* of one's self in Writing, as well as in Addresses to the *Fair* and the *Great*, is seldom any advantage to a Man, at least in this Age, where the highest Impudence passes for a handsome Assurance, and *Noise* and *much Talk* for *Wit*, and *Repartee*: It dispirits a Man, and as he can't please himself with what he Writes, so he very hardly can rise to the taste of any that are not duller. But when I was forc'd to this Curse of Scribling, I furnish'd my self with as much of a *Stoic*, as I cou'd, to fortifie my self against publick Censure; and in my own defence soon believ'd *Reputation* but a *Whim*, since the Worst had their Admirers, as well as the Best, at least in our Age; nor cou'd I perswade my self that the next wou'd be one yet better in its Judgment. And to say truth, there is nothing cou'd make me have any tolerable Opinion of my self, but the *Love* and *Esteem* I have for you; whom (give me leave to contradict

dict my self, and shew such *Atrageance* I do pretend to value, as much as any Man can: and I defie my greatest Enemies to do me Justice, and contradict me by any word or discourse ev'n where I had a Moral Certainty, you cou'd never hear of it again.

This, Sir, I urge, as a Praise of my self; for next to being a good Poet, is to know how to value one; the first has given *Immortality*, the latter (when in a Man of Quality) gain'd it. But lest the length of my Letter shou'd do, what I apprehend from my Visits I'll

*Subscribe my self,*

*Your Friend and humble Servant*

Charles Gildon.

*To his Ingenious Friend Mr. George Isaacson, in defence of Personal Reflections.*

*London, May the 6th. 1693.*

**Y**OU tell me you have read Mr. —'s Book, and are extremely pleas'd with the *Wir*, and *fine Sense* of it; but that you cannot allow of his Personal Reflections. I wish you had subjoyn'd your Reason for your Opinion, because I know

you guide your self extreamly by Reason in all things, and also because you know I'm very fond of a Reason to strengthen an Assertion that is brought against one I do esteem, as I do Mr. — But since you have not sent your Reason against him in this particular, I'll give you mine for him.

Not to justify him by the daily Example of other Authors, which wou'd be tedious, and to little purpose, the very Reason of the thing its self (supposing all the Reflections Just and True) shou'd Vindicate his Practice in that particular. For if Men must not be told their Faults, they'l never mend 'em; and *general Reflections* will never do the Business, because the Devilish good Opinion ev'ry Man has of himself, furnishes him with an Evasion from the lash of general Characters. *Aristophanes* kept many of the *Athenians* in awe, and within moderate bounds by this means; and so regulated the City better than the Philosophers, with their empty Sophisms, or the Laws, with their blunted Edge. But after the Thirty Tyrants had put down this Liberty with their Chorus, the Profitable was lost in Comedy, and *Menander* cou'd do nothing but Delight. I know *Horace* says, That this Liberty deserv'd a Curb, but that was, because it deviated from Truth, and like other of the best Institutions, was perverted by Passion or Int'rest to serve a turn. *Satire* among the *Romans* took this course where the Poets durst: and *Catullus*, that was no Satirist, told *Cæsar* of his Vices, and that publickly in Verse; yet



yet *Cæsar* had that Temperance to Caress him, tho' he had committed his Infamy to as long a Life, as he cou'd do his Noble Acts. But if the Fops, Fools, and Scriblers of our Age, are overrun with Vices more troublesom to the Public, than *Cæsar's* venereal Sallies, without his Moderation, and Modesty, Must they go unmark'd? Must the Town be always pester'd with their insufferable Impertinences, because, tho' they have been ridicul'd in general Characters a Thousand times, will yet by no means believe themselves touch'd? There is no Remedy for these Public Grievances, but particular Reflections, and tho', as you say, No Man is free from Follies that may be expos'd, yet they will be much diminish'd in them that have any sence, by this means, or at least be made less visible; and then 'tis not much more pains to be Wise, than to play the fool with Secresie, and one might as well shake hands with Vice for good and all, as to be at the fatigue to Sin with discretion.

You wonder, you say, That *Aristophanes* had not his Throat cut for the Personal Abuses he gave his Countrymen: But I must tell you, That Vice and Folly then, tho' common enough, had not that lewd eye upon Mankind, as they have now. A *Fop* or *Knave*, that was then expos'd, had all the Audience against him, and to redeem his reputation, asham'd of his Folly or Vice reform'd. Men came then from a Play full of as many good Resolutions, as a very Penitent Sinner from a sensible Pulpit Harangue of Death,



and Judgment, but now they come away no more affected, than a hardened Usurer from a Sermon of the Revelations. The World's extreemly alter'd since *Aristophanes* his days. We can't endure to be thought guilty of what we fondle and caress; Nay, now to touch upon a Vice that's grown a Public Grievance, this Fop; or that Whore, that's hit, shall engage a whole Party against you. To expose a Man by a particular, that's incorrigible by all general Characters, reforms him not; but makes him preposterously fonder of Vindicating his Error, than of mending it; and he had rather continue the Publick Jest, with the additional Scandal of having committed new Follies in Defence of the Old, than come into the common rank of Mankind, and cease to be singular, and troublesome. Men heretofore did with their Follies, and Vices, as some of our Modern Sparks do with their Mistresses; fondle them till they come to be known, but then turn 'em off, to avoid the Scandal of a keeping Cully; But now Men are Wedded to 'em, they take 'em with *Damn'd hot better for worse, till Death doth them part*; and think themselves, as much bound to fight a Man for exposing them, as for attacking the Honor of their House, tho' in reality they are no more oblig'd to do so, than a Man is to Vindicate the Honor of a Wife not only he himself, but the whole Town know to be a Whore, and have contributed to the making her so.

After

After all this, you'll ask me, perhaps, if I have not my share of Follies and Vices, that I am for falling so foul upon those of my Neighbours? Why, 'faith to deal sincerely with you, I have abundantly more than my share, which makes me the severer in my Observation of other Mens to keep my self in Countenance. But this advantage I have made of it, I have lessen'd the incredible number, my Mind was over-run with, and shall endeavour to pursue the course till I've brought 'em, within a more conscionable compass, for I never hope to clear my self entirely.

I am, Sir,

*Your Friend and Servant*

Char. Gildon.

*An Apology for Poetry, in an Essay directed to Walter Moil Esq;*

**I**N an Age when e'ery ignorant Scribler sets up for a Man of Authority; and as many as can but tell their Syllables on their Fingers, without Genius, without Learning, or any Excuse for Writing, arrogate the Glorious Name of Poets, and, by their Scandalous Pretensions to it, bring the *Pride of Conquerors, and the Envy of Philosophers*, into an unjust and shameful Neglect; 'Tis the Duty of an humble and zealous Admirer of

those God-like *Few*, whom Art, Nature, and Heav'n have evidently exalted to that Supreme Dignity, to make an Apology for them, who ought not to sink under the Crimes of this contemptible Race of wretched Poetafters, who ought to be avoided by all that have the least Regard to their own Repose. For this infamous Generation, these Bullies of *Parnassus*, forsaking the humble, and quiet *Call* of their own Fortune, with a Sacrilegious Ambition, to make a Noise in the World, endevour a Rape on the Sacred *Nine*: and having as little *Modesty* as *Poetry*, continually boast the Favours and Enjoyment of *Calliope* at least, tho' like *Ixion* they caress nothing but a Cloud, the Harmonious Goddess vanishing from their Prophane Embrace. These are Sparks, who, by perpetually repeating them, talk themselves into so good an Opinion of their own Performances, that they can never be brought to think till enough of themselves to be discourag'd from their Poetical Vanity, in which they are confirm'd by the ignorant Applause of some, and the Unaccountable Diversion of others, who have a Vanity in pleasing themselves with caressing and indulging their Folly; tho' this is something pardonable, since the Admonition given by an old Poet to one of these Gentlemen's Inclinations wou'd be almost fruitless,

*Quod mihi Celsus agit monitus multumq; mendus  
Privatas ut quærant opes, & tangere vitæ  
Scripta Palatinus quæcumq; recepit Apollo.*

They

They are not to be reclaim'd, nay, the Fate of *Thamyras* wou'd scarce effect it, the Breaking their Lute wou'd not hinder their Writing, nor the loss of their Eyes their Repeating, tho' perhaps Blindness might be some Advantage to their Acquaintance, by giving them a possibility of avoiding them; for a Seeing Poetaster has an Hawk's Eye at one he intends to recite too, he spies him at a distance, and swoops upon him before he can make his Escape.

These are the Banes of Society, and have brought an Odium on that admirable Science they pretend to, with some People; who, tho' they have Wit, want Judgment to distinguish betwixt *Pretence* and *Reality*. Others, who ought to have regard to the Protection of the *Muses*, and are sensible of the difference of Merit, and Impudence, are yet too fond of more ungenerous Pleasures, to Sacrifice them to the Care of the Poets. There are a Sort of Men, that love Pleasure, but are Sordid in their Choice of it; beyond measure preferring those of the Body to those of the Mind. They value not what Expence they are at in keeping a Whore for the use of half the Town, yet are lordidly Penurious in their Grati-  
fications of a Poet; a look, a sigh, a senseless word of the first, can melt 'em into Profuseness, and Poverty, when the Noblest Thoughts, dress'd in the most Charming Numbers and Language, shall not move them to consider the Necessity of the Author of them. Nay, tho' they value themselves as Men of Sense as well as Fortune, their  
Dogs,



Dogs, and their Bottle are more their Care, than the Darlings of Heav'n the Poets.

*Mæcenas*, and *Augustus*, were the only Keeping Patrons; the Poets were their Mistresses, and never were they so happy, or wanton'd so much in Pleasure, as in their Intimacy with *Virgil*, *Horace*, *Gallus*, &c. Their Company was their Regale, tho' *Virgil* (if we measure the Excellence of it by our Tests, Facetiousness and Buffoonry) was none of the best. I'm extreamly pleas'd with *Augustus*, and cou'd almost Sacrifice to his Memory when I read this charming Expostulation to *Horace*—— *Iratum me tibi scito quod non in plerisq; Ejusmodi scriptis mecum potissimum loquaris. An vereris ne apud Posteris tibi infame sit, quod videaris familiaris nobis esse.* You see he was ambitious that Posterity by often reading his Name in *Horace's* Writings, shou'd know how he valu'd him. Had our Poets this Encouragement, they wou'd surpass the *Romans* and *Greeks* too, and *England* wou'd have her greater *Horace* and *Virgil*; for as *Martial* says,

*Sint Mæcenates non deerunt Flacce Marones.*

And,

*Carmina proveniunt animo deducta Sereno.*

But where there must be a care of Subsistence, the Mind can never have that Sereneness it ought for so Noble and Sacred an Office. What therefore



fore might we not expect, shou'd a *Richelieu* or *Mæcenæ* arise, from such who under all these disadvantages have performed so well? I hope this Apology may remove some prejudices that may oppose that Happiness, and provoke some better Pen to do Poetry more Justice than my Time or Ability wou'd permit.

If we regard the Antiquity of its Origine, the Nobleness of its Subject, or the Beauty of its Aim, or Design (which three Things are the Test of the Excellence of Arts and Sciences, in reference to each other) we shall easily find *Poesie* most ancient in its Rise, most honorable in the Subjects and Matters it adorns, and most transcendently excellent in its Usefulness and End.

First, To say nothing of other Authors, *Polydore*, *Virgil* proves from the Second Book of *Eusebius's* *Evangel. Prep.* that it is of a very early Date; and from hence 'tis also evident, That it flourish'd among the most ancient of the *Hebrews*, who were by several Ages of greater Antiquity, than the *Grecian* Poets. For *Moses*, their Leader, having pass'd the Red Sea, inspir'd by a Divine Fury, sung Praise and Thanks to his Omnipotent Deliverer in Hexameter Verse, according to *Josephus* in the Second Book of his *Antiquity of the Jews*. Thus the Royal *David* too, compos'd Hymns to God, in various Numbers, as *Josephus* in the Seventh Book of the *Antiquities of the Jews*, in these words confirms. *David therefore (says he) after he was deliver'd from War and Danger, in the Enjoyment of full Tranquility, and Peace, compos'd*  
Songs

*Songs and Hymns to God in various and different Numbers, as Trimeters, Quinquimeters; with whom St. Jerome in his Preface to the Chronicles of Eusebius agrees, where he writes in this manner. Lastly, (says he) What is more sonorous than the Book of Psalms? Which like the Works of our Horace, or the Greek Pindar, now runs on Iambick Feet, now sounds with Alcaic's, now swells with the Saphic Numbers, &c.*

But to come to the Gentils, we find Poetry so very Ancient that they know not its Rise, but attribute it to their God *Apollo*, and the *Muses*; as *Apollo*, in *Ovid*, himself assures us.

*Juppiter est genitor: per me quod eritq; fuitq;  
Estq; patet, per me concordant Carmina nervis.*

*Apollo* reciev'd the Harp from *Mercury*, and then was made President of the *Muses*. By which attributing the Original of Poetry to the Gods, 'tis evident that the Gentiles themselves look'd upon it as a Sacred and venerable Thing, above Humane Invention. From this Spring it descended, as it were by Succession to *Linus*, (the Son of *Apollo* and *Urania*.) And *Orpheus*, (the Son of *Apollo* and *Calliope*) and *Thamyras*; These two last with *Hercules*, were the Scholars to *Linus*. We need not instance *Arien*, *Amphion* and *Museus*, who are Poets of a very ancient Date. Their uncommon Praises, are celebrated in so extraordinary a manner, that there can nothing be added to their Eternal Glory, their Encomiums, indeed,

indeed, transcending all Belief and Understanding: so much did succeeding Ages think was due to the first Fathers of Poetry, as to make their Performances more, than Mortal.

The Divine *Orpheus*, the Wonder of *Better Nature*, with the Music of his Lyre and Song, drew Trees, Stones, and Beasts to be his list'ning Audience, which is not so impossible, since *Campagna* proves that all things have Sense. But the charming of Rocks, Stones and Trees, the taming Wild Beasts, and the stopping the course of rapid Torrents, were the least of his Performances, Hell lost its Terror, and put on a more agreeable Face, the tortur'd Ghosts forgot their past sufferings in the Heav'n of their present Ease, and the very *Furies*, grew Mild and Calm at the sound of his Melodious Verse, and Lyre; all which is admirably describ'd by *Ovid*, in his *Metamorphosis*. These Powers did Antiquity give to *Orpheus*, of the Sweetness of whose Poesie, 'twould be superfluous to produce the Testimony of the most ancient Authors. *Arion* and *Amphion* want not their Miracles, of the Dolphin and the Walls of *Thebes*. Of the latter, *Horace*, Art. Poetic.

*Dictus & Amphion Thebanae conditor Arcis  
Saxa movere sono Testudinis, & prece blanda  
Ducere quo vellet.* —

Tho' there be nothing more vulgar, and common, than these Fables of the Ancient Poets, and Musicians; yet do they evidently demonstrate,  
that

that even from those Primitive Times, down to our Iron Age, these extraordinary Praises and Encomiums were only bestow'd on this divine Power of Poetry; that Poets alone seem'd worthy by this most Sacred Art to have the next place to the Gods themselves. So that this Universal Applause (if there were no other Motive) ought to recommend it to our Admiration and Esteem.

But 'tis agreed by the universal, and unanimous consent of almost all Nations, and Authors, that Poetry not only contains all other Arts and Sciences, but has this Prerogative peculiar to it self, That no Rules, no Masters with the best Instructions, can teach it; unless those who apply themselves to this divine Science, are destin'd to the Sacred Function, by Nature, and a Genius. Whence arose that Maxim, allow'd of by all Men of Sense, *Poeta nascitur non fit*, That a Poet is Born not Made. And from hence it follows in my Opinion, That a Poet derives the honor of that Name from his Nature and Genius, not from his Art; This every Scholar has, That none but the Darlings of Heav'n and Nature. This may be acquir'd by a Studious Pedant, That must be born, and grow up with the auspicious Babe, for *Poeta nascitur non fit*.

I'm much mistaken if Polidore Virgil, do not comment on this Axiom in his first Book *De Rer. Inventor*, Cap. 8. where he says, 'Tis certain that Poetry for many Reasons excels the other Arts and Sciences, either because no other Art is to be acquir'd but by a long Application to it, or because, as Strabo



in the beginning of his Geography, against Eratosthenes, eloquently demonstrates, it contains all others; because of all the Arts that Humane Wit has produc'd Poetry alone, is taught by a Divine Inspiration, &c.

Cicero in his Oration for Archias the Poet, has left us the Praise of Poets (of which Name himself had been extreamly Ambitious) in these words, *Atqui sic (says he) à summis hominibus, eruditissimisque accepimus, cæterarum rerum studia, & Doctrinâ, & Præceptis, & Arte, constare; Poetam Naturâ ipsâ valere, & mentis viribus excitari, & quasi divino quodam spiritu afflari; quare suo Jure noster Ennius Sanctos appellat Poetas, quod quasi decum aliquo dono, & Munere commendari nobis esse videantur.*

You see, Sir, that Cicero confesses that divine Fire in Poets which himself desir'd in vain, and that Poets seem to be recommended by the Gift, and Benefit of the Gods, to our reception. If he that felt not this Sacred Fury was sensible of this, we may credit Ovid, who by his own Experience says, *De Fastis*, lib. 6.

*Facta Canam, sed erunt, qui me finxisse loquentur*

*Nullaq; Mortali numina visa putent.*

*Est Deus in Nobis, agitante Calescimus illo,*

*Impetus hic sacræ semina mentis habet.*

And Socrates in Plato affirms this Poetical Fury to be divinely inspir'd. Plato in his Second Book of the Common-wealth, calls Poets the Sons of the Gods, and in *Lysis* terms them, the Parents  
and

and Guides of Wisdom; and elsewhere he calls *Homer* the Father of all Wisdom and Philosophy, in these Words: "Ὅμηρος πρῶτος διδασκαλός, καὶ ἡγεμὼν ἀπάντων τῶν καλῶν τῶν τεχνικῶν, *Homer was the Guide and Master of the Tragical Beauties and Virtues.* And *Petronius Arbiter* tells us, that the Mind can neither conceive, or bring forth its Poetical Births, unless it be impregnated with great and boundless stores of Learning; and for this reason he says in his *Satyricon*, that *Eumolpus* spoke oft'ner divinely, that is, Poetically, than like a Man.

Those who endeavour to draw the Original of Poetry from Singing, are not in my Opinion much mistaken. For when the Ancients endeavour'd to declare the Affections or Passions of the Mind in Song by the Sound, and peculiar Variation of the Voice, as it were in a more Polite and Elaborate Speech; this rude and unpolish'd Sound by degrees refin'd into an Art. Which, when it became (where-ever it was) so improv'd, that with it the Praises of the Gods or Heroes, was celebrated in certain Verses or Rhimes, gave Birth to *Poetry*; which indeed seems truly, & really to be deriv'd from Singing, since with the Learned ev'n now, a Poet is not said, to *Speak*, but *Sing*. The antient *Germans*, a Warlike People, had no other History of the Acts of the Kings and Leaders, but certain Songs or Verses, by which they either extoll'd their Warlike Exploits or rous'd the Minds of the Soldiers to fight, as we find

find in *Polyannus*, *Solon*, animated the *Athenians*, to Battle. And the *Lacedamonians* Sacrific'd to the *Muses* before they began a Fight; that we read that the noble Heroe, *Marthius*, King of *Hungary*, us'd to be so touch'd with the Acts of the ancient Heroes, as he song 'em to his Lute, that the force with which it affected his Mind, was apparent in his Body; imitating *Achilles*, who sung the Praises of great Commanders to his Harp.

Another Proof of the Antiquity of *Poesie*, are the *Sibyls*, the Oracles of the *Pythian Apollo*, many of which are in *Herodotus*; Inscriptions, Monuments of Victories, Pillars, and Obelisks, all which afford cause to believe Verse to have a very early Original. With these the Writings of the greatest and most ancient Authors shew their Works by their Authorities and Sentences, to render them the more palatable and efficacious. Nay, *St. Paul* is said to have convinc'd the *Athenians* of the madness of their Idolatry, by part only of a Verse of the Poet *Aratus*, and to have us'd that Verse of *Menander* to the *Christian Corinthians*.

*Evil Discourses corrupt good Manners.*

Thus much for the Divine, and very ancient Origin of *Poesie*, and now we are come to the Subject of it, according to our former Division.

Tho' other Arts and Sciences afford abundant matter, and a large Field for our Thoughts and Consideration, yet none can stand in com-

petition with *Poesie*; for what is there in all the wondrous Variety, and vast extent of Nature that falls not under the consideration of a Poet? All the Wonders, Mercies, and Favours of the highest God, can in nothing be more gloriously express'd than in Verse: Who can describe the Beauty of his Providence, the Bounty of his Gifts, the Sacredness of his Mysteries, with such Charms, such Force, such Excellence, as the Poet in his Melodious Numbers, Majestic Language, and Divine Thoughts. Hence it was that the Royal Psalmist *David*, chose to appease the Anger of an offended God, with the soothing Sacrifice of this Penitential Verses. To this we add the Hymns of the antient *Hebrews*, of the old Church, and of the Poetical and holy Fathers of the New; who to make their Ejaculations and Jubilees of Seraphic Love, reach late Posterity, put them into Verse, as the most agreeable, and Kindred Repository of things so Sacred. Hence also (if with these Books we may mingle the Prophane) flow'd all those Hymns, Odes, Secular Poems, and so *Paeans* to *Jove*, *Mercury*, *Apollo*, and the rest of the Imaginary Gods of *Heathens*. So Sacred has Poetry been esteem'd in all Ages, so *Charming*, and so *Comprehensive*, that they always judg'd what-ever was design'd for the Praises of Gods, Kings and Heroes, or for the common and universal Use, Profit and Pleasure of all Men, ought to be delivered in numbers, in Verse, as destin'd to all that was Sublime and Great. To this we owe the Genealogy, and

noble



noble Deeds of the Kings and Commanders in *Homer*, the common Father of all Poets, and in *Virgil* his Competitor of Glory; these being wrote in noble Verse, fill our Minds with fresh and wonderful pleasure, every time we peruse them.

To proceed to the several Institutes of our Life, particularly the spurs to Virtues, and flight from Vice, the purgation of the manners, &c. The Funeral Griefs, and Lamentations on the Dead, and finally all those particulars that the Accidents of humane Life produce, desirable or pleasant, all which are, and have been the subjects of Poems: Whence the ancient Greek Authors reduc'd all things divine and humane, to five Heads.

The first they termed *προσῳδόν*, under which they seem compendiously to have plac'd all that was referr'd to the Praises of the Gods, the Rights of Religion, and the Victories of the Heroes, and the Celebration of noble Acts. The second *ἐναγκαλιὰν*, in which the Virtues of great and extraordinary Men, were prais'd, as *Elogium* and *Panegyrics*. The third *συμφορίαν*, the use of which was to express the Virtues that tend to the purging and probity of the Manners. The fourth *θρῆνην*, which performed the Funeral Sorrows and Lamentations. The fifth they call'd *δευκαλιανόν*, under which was contain'd all that could be conducive to the Delight and Pleasures of Mankind.

Poetry having been always generously imploy'd none can call in question the Nobility and Excellence of its Subject and Matter. Tho' some perhaps may object, that Philosophy, Law, and History, &c. treat of other things of a higher Nature, whilst they discover things from their Causes, or by Arguments, prove to others those that are already discover'd : But they are but very raw Novices in the Academy of Poetry, who are ignorant that the Elements or first Foundation of most, if not all Arts, as well as their progress, are deriv'd from Poetry, and the best Authors of all times have granted the Poets the first Philosophers.

For from this Treasure, or Ocean of Arts and Sciences, are all the Rivulets of Learning sprung, and have lifted up their Heads ; nay, they have abundantly drawn whatever they contain of Pleasure or Artifice, from Poetry, as from the vast and Mother Receptacle of all the Mellifluous Waters of Eloquence. To this we may add, what Strabo says, viz. *Poeticam Antiqui vocant Primariam quandam Philosophiam, quæ nos a pueris ad vitam instruat, & cum Voluptate doceat, cujusmodi Mores & affectus, & Actiones nostras esse conveniat. Quin nostri homines Poetam vel solam sapientem esse perhibuerunt ; ob eamq; rem civitates Græciæ pueros primum omnium Poeticum erudunt : non utiq; meræ oblectationis gratiâ, sed ut prudentiæ modestiæq; principis imbuantur, i. e. The Ancients term'd Poetic a more excellent kind of Philosophy, which shou'd from our Childhood inform our Lives, and teach us with Pleasure,*

Pleasure; what our Manners, our Passions, and our Actions ought to be. Nay, our Countrymen wou'd scarce admit any into the Number of Wise Men, but Poets; and for this Reason, the Cities of Greece ground Boys first of all in Poetry: not meerly for their Delight, but that they may be instructed in the Precepts of Modesty, and Prudence, or Wisdom.

And justly too did the Ancients tearm Poetry, a more excellent Philosophy; for if the Excellence of a thing depend on its more or less aptness to obtain the End 'tis design'd for, this Prerogative is justly given to Poetry: The End of Philosophy is to form in the Mind Idea's, and habits of Virtue, and they are fixt there better by Pleasure than Pain, because the Mind is naturally averse to Pain, and propense to Pleasure. But the stiff, and difficult Method of those who are *Simply* Philosophers, perplexes us too much with Metaphysical Notions, Logical Distinctions, and a long train of Arguments, which gives the Mind a fatigue to gain the Knowledge it aims at; whereas the Poetic Philosopher proposes a fairer, more adequate, compendious and comprehensive Instruction, which the Mind is so far from labouring to Unriddle, and Understand, that it at first sight perceives it, is in Love with its Beauty, and greedily takes the charming Impressions it gives, whilst convey'd into it by Melodious Numbers, bewitching Expression, Mighty Thoughts, and Illustrious Examples. That Great Poet and Critic *Horace* declares how fit he thinks Poetry for the Instruction of Youth in the First Epistle of the Second Book.

*Os tenerum pueri balbumq; Poeta figurat ;  
Torquet ab obscænis jam nunc sermonibus aurem ;  
Mox etiam Pectus præceptis format amicis  
Asperitatis, & Invidiæ, corrector & Iræ, &c.*

The other admirable Verses that follow these, you are, Sir, extremely well acquainted with, which so beautifully set off the several Advantages of Poetry. And *Hieronimus Vida* (one of the best Italian Poets that have writ in Latin as *Rapin* assures us) in the First Book of his Poetics is of the same Mind —

*Postquam igitur primas fundi puer hauserit artes  
Jam nunc incipiat rignos accedere fontes  
Et Phæbum, & Dulces Musas assuescat Amare.*

Add to this what *Horace* says in his *de Arte Poetica*,

— *Fuit hæc Sapientia quondam  
Publica privatis secernere, sacra Prophanis, &c.*

and the Ten following Verse which I have not room here to quote. *Erasmus*, that wanted no Wit, calls it a Banquet compos'd of all the Delicacies, and Quintessence of all other Arts, and Sciences. And *Melancthon* places the Excellence of Poetry for the penetration into Mens Minds, next to the Sacred Scriptures, especially Tragedy.

Poets being, as you see, the Darling Sons of the Gods, born to great and sublime things, and the



the Correctors and Guides of Common Life, they have not, without Reason, been esteem'd by the greatest Monarchs, and Potentates of the World, and made Instructors and Tutors to Kings, and Princes : I speak of true Poets, not of of the little Mushromes of *Parnassus*, the Street-repeating Poetafters. Thus *Linus* was the Tutor to *Hercules*, the tamer of Monsters, and Tyrants : And *Alexander* the Great, with veneration, respected *Homer*, as the Guide, and Director of his Life, reading his Works daily, in the heat and hurry of the Conquest of the World, and slept with them under his Pillow. *Ennius* instructed that great General *Scipio Africanus* in Poetry, which he judg'd so advantageous to him, that he took him with him in his most weighty Expeditions, and chose to be Bury'd in the same Tomb with the Poet. Nothing has to me given a greater instance of *Cæsar's* value for Poets, than the Welcome he gave *Catullus* to his Table, the same day he had fix'd such a Brand of Infamy upon him as remains in *Catullus* his Works to this day. *Augustus*, both the Patron, and Judge of the Muses, Cares'd that Noble Pair of Poets, *Horace* and *Virgil*, as his most intimate and bosom Friends, honor'd them as his Masters, and shower'd his Beneficent Favours on them, who, without doubt in return, introduc'd him to the Sacred *Penetralia* of the *Muses*, the divine Retreats of *Apollo* : which made this Emperor keep the Birth-day of *Virgil* e'ery Year, as if 'twere the auspicious Feast of his own Success. The Emperor *Julian* made the

Creek Lyric Poet *Bacchylides* his Master, or Director; and *Gratian* after he had made a great progress in the most generous of Learning, he honour'd and advanc'd his Master *Ausonius* ev'n to the Consulship. And *Arcadius* and *Honorius* erected a Monument to the Memory of *Claudian*, in the forum of *Trajan*.

But nothing, in my opinion, challenges the Esteem of the World more for this Art, than that it Corrects thus the Barbarity, and Sordidness that so generally rules Mankind, and destroys, that Happiness we falsely aim at by other means,

*Emollit Mores (as Ovid has it) nec finit esse feros.*

A Man may be a *Divine*, and yet be Covetous, and Deceitful, two Banes of Piety, Religion, and Morality; but a Poet cannot be guilty either of Avarice or Deceit, I mean a True Poet, a *Virgil*, a *Horace*, a *Dryden*, a *Waller*. And,

*Si carmina condes*

*Nunquam te fallant animi sub vulpe latentes.*

*Hor. Art. Poet.*

And,

*Vatis avarus,*

(*num*;

*Non temere est animus: Versus amat hoc studet a-*  
*Detrimenda, fugas ser vorum, Incendia ridet:*

*Non fraudem Socio, Puerove incognat ullam*  
*Pupillo: Vron filiquis, & pane secundo*

*Malluric quinquam puer & Malus, uclis-Urbi.*

There

There is no need of prosecuting the point of Esteem the Poets have been in, in the better Ages of the World, I will not therefore insist on the Seven Cities of Greece, that strove for the Glory of Giving Birth to *Homer*, nor on *Alexander*, who, when he took, sack'd, and burnt *Thebes*, spar'd the House of *Pindar*, and fixt this Verse over the Door.

Πινδαρεὺς οὐ μολοῦσσι καὶ σέβαν καὶ κλισίῃ,  
Burn not *Pindar's House*,

the same respect was shew'd his House by the *Lacedæmonians* when they destroy'd *Thebes*. I'll say nothing of the honour paid to the Memory of *Stesichorus*, in the Octogonal Monument at the Gates of *Catana* in *Sicily*. 'Twou'd be superfluous to take notice of the Value *Polycrates* had for *Anacreon*, *Archelaus* for *Euripides*, the King of *Egypt* and *Macedon* for *Menander*; *Ptolomæus Philadelphus* for *Callimachus*; and what I have said before of the *Latins* may suffice. But 'tis no wonder that the Politer Nations shou'd have this Esteem for the Divinest of Arts, since the very *Daves*, look'd upon of Old as more Barbarous, have yet discover'd all a-long, such a veneration for Poets, and *Poesie*, that on the Death of one of their Kings, they exal'd a Poet to the Throne, as the most worthy to succeed the Prince, he cou'd Praise so well; as *Saxo Grammaticus*, and *Joan. Bocerus* testify.

Without

Without doubt by this time 'tis sufficiently evident, That if any Art merits Esteem, either for the Antiquity of its Origine, or the Nobility of its Subject, Poetry must be granted the Prerogative of Precedence in Honor. Wherefore I shall say no more for a Proof of these two points of its Original and Subject, but now turn our Consideration to the third Branch of my Division, viz. The End and Profit, or advantage of Poetry.

The Philosophers lay down two principal Kinds of Studies, which are indeed different, but not opposite; that is, the *Contemplative* and the *Practical*, and they give the preference to the former, because Contemplation is pleasant for and in its self, and therefore more Noble; but the *Practical* *quatenus* practical is so only in regard of something else, and therefore less Noble than Contemplation. But 'tis sufficiently evident, that the Study of Poetry is for the most part Contemplative: Since no Poet is capable of forming any Noble Poem, with elaborateness and perfection, unless he first *dispose* his Speculations, and before consider, and weigh the Materials, and the peculiar Artifice that must be us'd in setting them off to their best advantage, and in the true Light, and Colours. And one thing is here to be observ'd, That a Poet through his whole performance, both whilst he contrives, invents, and puts his Thoughts in Metre, is still at the same time contemplating, so that he's compos'd of Speculation and Action, whereas other Studies either only contemplate, or only precisely put in Execution the destin'd Actions.



ations. First therefore, in that way *Poetry* is *Useful* in its self, and therefore admitting the former Axiom of the Philosophers, to be valu'd and persu'd, because Speculative. And Secondly, 'Tis Useful in regard of something else, because the Poetical Writings chiefly contain, the most beautiful, and inviting Doctrines, and Instructions, the best of Precepts for the happy and laudable directing of our Lives; Noble Sayings, and Deeds, Virtues, Rights and Manners of Nations. From all which, that may be chosen for the common benefit of Mankind, that is most justly imitable, and worthy in Virtue, that avoided, that is most abominable and detested in Vice.

*Contemplation* and *Thinking* is peculiarly the Poet's Business, on this Depends all the Beauties of Thought, and Expression. By using much to *Think*, they come to a justness and trueness of *Thought*, they run not away by halves, with imperfect Appearances that please the Imagination; they are not taken with all that glitters, but by much *Thinking* dive into the Nature of Things, and fix the Judgment to decide the Truth, or falsity of what is Charming, and Beautiful, and what seems so, at a sudden view. Hence proceed Justness, Proportion, and Harmony, without all which a Poet loses half his Glory, and Reputation with good Judges. From hence 'tis evident, That the End of Poetry is Noble, since it reaches the greatest Pleasure and the surest Profit of our Minds, and of our Life. Since 'tis directed to the Praise, of the Omnipotent, the

Cels-

Celebration of Virtues; the Rewards and Glory of Noble Acts, the Punishment and Infamy of Evil : Since to it we owe all the increases of our Knowledge ; and finally, since it effects all these nobler Ends it aims at.

But methinks, Sir, I hear you say, What needs all this to prove the Excellence of a Science, that carries a Natural Worth with it, and that so clearly, that like an innate Principle 'tis confess'd by all self-evident? for there is none, however dull, but does, or has attempted Poetry, with more or less success, whilst other Arts, and Sciences are not so universally caref'd. All pretend not to Philosophy, Mathematics, Law, Physic, or desire to be thought Proficients in those Arts ; but every one wou'd be thought a Poet, as if without being so, he cou'd not be thought a Man, so essential to Mankind does the universal and unanimous Ambition and Aim at it of ev'ry Man make it. I grant you, Sir, this is a sufficient Argument to any sensible Man, that considers it. But how few reflect on this, when they run down what they cou'd not obtain on their Endeavour : the greatest Railer against this divine Art, wou'd be proud to Father an excellent Poem. And it must be granted by them, That the greatest Philosophers, Historians, Orators, Physicians, Divines, Princes, Kings and Emperors of all Ages have discover'd this Desire we mention, and have made it evident, That they either were, or fain wou'd be Poets.

To pass over the Hebrews we have already mention'd

tion'd among the Roman Emperors, how few but have discover'd this Ambition? *Julius Cæsar, Augustus, Nero, Adrian, Gratian, Theodosius, Honorius, &c.* Those of *Julius Cæsar*.

*Feltria perpetuo nivium damnata rigore  
Forte mihi posside non audenta vale.*

*Augustus* often exercis'd this Faculty, particularly on *Virgil's* desire that his *Æneids* might be burnt; which begin thus:

*Ergone supremis potuit vox improba verbis  
Tam dirum mandare Nefas? Ergo ibit in ignes  
Magna; doctusque morietur Musa Maronis? &c.*

*Seneca* gives us this Verse of *Nero's* composing with this Commendatory Introduction, 1. *De Naturæ Quest. Cap. 5.* *Quid ergo sit? Colorem non imitæm ducunt; alioquin ut ait Nero Cæsar ulcissime.*

*Colla Cytheriacæ Splendent agrata Columba.*

More of his we might borrow from *Persius*, if we believe his Interpreters. *Adrian* returns the Poet *Florus* his Complement sent him in these Verses,

*Ego nolo Florus Esse  
Ambulare per Tabernas  
Flacitare per popinas  
Culices pati rotundas.*

Nay,

Nay, he was so very Boetical, that when he was  
a dying, he Verfify'd on his Soul;

*Anima vagula blandula*

*Hospes comesq; corporis*

*Quæ nunc ubi in loca*

*Pallidula, rigida, nudula;*

*Nec ut soles, dabis jocos?*

Those that are attributed to Gallienus, have  
more of a Poet, which he repeated at the Wed-  
ding of his Nephews, as Trebellius Pollio has it;  
holding them by the Hands;

*He ut, o pueri, pariter sudate Medullis*

*Omnibus inter vos; non murmura vestra columbæ*

*Brachia non bederæ, non vincant Oscula conche:*

And to say truth, 'tis pity Gallienus ever spoil'd  
an Emperor since he wou'd have made an ex-  
cellent Poet; for as Trebellius confesseth, *fuit enim*  
*Gallienus, quod negari non potest, oratione, Poemate,*  
*atq; Omnibus artibus Clarus.* For Gallienus was,  
says he, eminent in Oratory; Poetry, and all other  
Arts. And indeed his horrid Remissions proceed-  
ed from his being content with whatever for-  
tune wou'd let him have; he wanted Ambition,  
and was, as Horace describes a Poet, *Militiæ piger*  
*& malus.* Julian's Epigrams are to be found in  
the Anthology; and Ausonius informs us, that  
Theodosius was no small pretender to Poetry in  
these Verses.



*Bellandi fandi; potens Augustus, honorem  
 Bis meret, ut geminet titulus: qui praelia Musis  
 Temperat, & Geticum Moderatur Apolline Martem.  
 Arma inter Cimbroq; truces, furtoq; nocentes  
 Sauromatas, quantum cessat de tempore belli  
 Indulget latius tantum inter castra Camenus, &c.*

In short, tho' the Spirit of Poetry decay'd among the Romans, with their Empire, yet was there scarce one that did not make some pretences to the Muses. Nay, look among the Clergy of former Ages, and you shall find *Popes, Bishops, Cardinals, &c.* stand candidates for the Bays, as well as *Socrates, Plato, Democritus, Lycurgus, Solon, Aristotle*, among the Philosophers and Legislators; among the undignified Divines, *Melanchton, Beza, Jacomatus, Artomedes, &c.* the Civilians, *Ulpian, Modestinus, Alciatus, Budæus, Turnebus*, and a great many others, too numerous to be here inserted among the Physicians, *Ansonius, Fracastorius, Cordus, Lotichius Secundus, Sinetius, Posthius, Sambucus, &c.* Nay, ev'n among the Critics, a morose Generation, the *Scaliger's* Father and Son, the *Doussa's* Father and Son, *Cameranus, Mycellus, Strigelius, &c.* among the Historians, *Buchanan, Natales Comes, Lit. Gyraldus, Racipius, Meibonius, Baudius, &c.* Among the Rhetoricians, *Pontanus, Angel. Politianus, &c.*

Thus much for Exotics; but (Sir) should I pretend to number the Poets, and Pretenders to Poetry in our own Nation, as 'twou'd be superfluous, so 'twou'd be endless. Search all Ranks and

and Degrees of Men, from the *Beau Lord*, to the homely Swain; a keeping his Sheep, or driving his Hogs; and as *Cupid*, so has *Apollo* been at work with 'em; the *Strods*'s and *Marria*'s, the *Jones* and *Sue* have had their respective Tribute of Rhime; and from the grave Doctor of Divinity, to the little Country Curate, with his Problematic Crambo's, and Hypothetic Propositions: So that there can be no more doubt made of the former Assertion of all Men's Desires and Pretensions to it, than that those are a Proof of its received Excellence.

Before I conclude this Essay, I shall obviate two or three Objections, made by some old morose Sparks, that have out-liv'd that little Sense their more sprightly years afforded them, and some Precilians, that build Piety and Godliness in Spiritual Railings, and a mortify'd Phiz, which are but *Feints*, or Blinds to Observers.

The first is, that 'tis a very useless and unprofitable Study, no Estates to be got by it, at least in this Age: That it contributes meerly to Pleasure, not to our knowledge. To the first I answer, that 'tis very true, that there is no hopes of rising to be an Alderman by Poetry; but then I must tell them, 'tis not for those to apply themselves to that place the Desires of their Souls on Mony; for as they'll never obtain that end by it, so will they never reach any Excellence in the Art, as being not destin'd by nature to it; for to a Poet, Heaven gives a large and noble Soul, above the narrow aim of Baggs and Hords of Treasure; and thus

Thus far I shall grant it an unprofitable Study, as  
*Petronius Arbitr* has witness'd long ago:

*Qui Pelago credit, magno se fœnore tollit  
 Qui Pugnas, & Castra perit, præcingitur Auro;  
 Vilis Adulator picto jacet ebrius Ostro,  
 Et qui sollicitat nuptas ad Præmia peccat :  
 Sola Pruinosus borret Facundia Pannis  
 Atq; inopi linguâ desertas invocat Arès.*

No, there are the roaring Billows, The Camp,  
 the Court, and the City allotted by Fate for those  
 that thirst for Wealth; the Muses love Tranqui-  
 lity, an Easie and Contented State, and teach  
 their Darlings, that

*Nec vixit male qui Natus mori ensq; fœellit.*

The Riches the Poet gains is Fame: It termi-  
 nates not with this life like Money, and Estate,  
 nor can his Spendthrift Son lavish the mighty  
 Store he has laid up, as the Miser's Son does what  
 his Father got from Fools or Knaves. Nay, the  
 Usefulness of this Study is opposite to getting  
 Estates as they are generally got: It punishes A-  
 rice, rewards Generosity, softens the Mind from  
 Barbarity to Compassion for the Miseries of others,  
 cleanses it from Deceit and Hypocrisie, elevates  
 it from little base Designs, to Noble and Open  
 Actions, and so through all the Ends and Uses of  
 this Divine Art.

As to the Second *that it contributes merely to our Pleasure, not Knowledge*, that is evidently false, both from what has been said, and from a Consideration that it yields not only a Necessary, but Noble Knowledge, that is, of Men, of Manners, of Virtue, &c. Nor is there any Study or Art but has been attempted in Poetry, as a short view will make evident. To pass over *David* and the Hebrew Poets, whose Excellencies are lost by the general Ignorance, not only of the Language they wrote in, but the Custom, &c. on which many of the Beauties depend. *Orpheus, Homer, Pindar, Horace, &c.* have celebrated the Praises of the Divine Power, tho' under the Names of their Suppositions Gods, and Goddeses. Among the Christians, we find *Prudentius, Juvenius, Arator, Virgatus, Mauricius, Sannazarius, Vulteijs*, and an innumerable Company of Sacred Writers. Astrology, Astronomy, &c. has been treated of by *Livius, Aratus, Ralingenius, Manilius, Buchanan, &c.* Physic's by *Hesiod, Macer, Lucretius, Empedocles*, and others. Husbandry by *Hesiod, Virgil, &c.* Pastoral Life and Sports, *Theocritus, Virgil, Calphurnius, Dantes, &c.* Hunting has been discours'd of by *Gratius Nemesianus, Natales Comes, &c.* Tragedy (which affords us a hundred admirable Lessons of Knowledge, and Improvement) we owe chiefly to *Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides*. Tho' I think our English Tragedians, have excell'd them, particularly *Mr. Dryden*, who in some of his Plays, I shall always think, has abundantly out done *Sophocles*. Then for the



Acts of Heroes, we have *Homer, Virgil, Pindar, Lucan, Statius, Cowly, Sir William D'Avenant, &c.* this is a sort of Poem which *Horace* thinks more Instructive than Philosophy, in his second Epistle of his first Book to *Lollius*.

*Trojani belli scriptorem maxime Lolli,  
Dum tu declamas Romæ, Præneste relegi (quid non,  
Quiquid sit Pulchrum, quid Turpe, quid Utile,  
Plenus ac melius Chrysippo & Crantore dicit.*

Nor are the Amorous Essays of *Anacreon, Sappho, Gallus, Catullus, Ovid, Horace, Tibullus, Propertius*, with abundance of the Moderns, to be thought ill of by the Precisians, as we shall by and by prove, but granted Improvers of our Knowledge in the Nature of the passions, the fatigues, and pleasures of Love, as well as the Dangers and Impertinences of Intrigue. *Oppian* wrote of Fishes, *Nicander* of Antidotes against the biting of Venomous Beasts, of Herbs, and Gardening, *Macer* and *Palladius*, of Plants. *Mr. Cowly*, of Medicine, *Serenus, Sammonicus, and Marcellus*: Of Weights, and Measures, *Q. Rheimnius Fannus Palæmon*; which Book by some is attributed to *Priscian*. *Phocylides*, and *Pythagoras*, writ in Verse of the Precepts of Virtue, and *Solon*, and *Tyrtæus*, of Politics or the Administration of the Common-Wealth: Wholsom, and Instructive Satyr, *Horace, Juvenal, Persius, Mr. Dryden, Mr. Wicherly* in his *Plain-dealer*, and other Poets have given us; nor are the little Epigrammatists to be forgot, having

their Use and Diversion, tho', I confess my self no Admirer of that sort of Poetry, if it merit that Name.

From hence 'tis Evident, That we may not only learn all that can be advantageous to our Knowledge, and by consequence that the accusation is false, that it serves only to Pleasure; but also that All things that are the Subjects of this Sovereign of Sciences.

There remains yet an Objection, some Men make no small bustle about, *viz.* That Poetry is "too prophane in making use of so many false "Gods, and Goddesses, *Fanus*, *Satyrs*, and *Nymphs*, "and the rest of the gay Race of Fancy; and "that they scatter the Seeds of Debauchery in "the Minds of Youth, by their Amorous Verses, "their Lustful Songs, &c. for which Reason "ev'n *Plato* Banish'd them from his Common-  
"Wealth.

The first part of this Objection, I'm confident, you'll think extreamly ridiculous, and that it merits not to be taken Notice of. But when you shall remember that in the Third Century the Christians were so Zealous, as to forbid the reading of all Heathen Authors, particularly Poets, on this Account, and consider, that we have some still of the same Mind here in *England*, that wou'd not have the Name of *Jupiter*, *Mars*, and *Venus* (no, not in *Propria quæ Maribus*) come into their Childrens Mouths, especially their Worship, their Lovers, &c. I hope you will allow that 'tis not wholly unnecessary to clear ev'n this Objection.

'Tis

'Tis true, these Fables cannot be condemn'd by any, but by those who are incapable to dive into the admirable use of 'em. They must consider, that ev'ry Art, as well as ev'ry Language, has its peculiar Beauties and Proprieties of Elocution, to take which away (especially if, as Poets particularly do, we represent Antiquity) is to render it almost insipid, and without its most taking quality Pleasure, that best conveys Instruction. Rob Poetry of this Beauty of the Fables and the Gods (I mean the ancient Poems, so full of admirable Instruction by their means given us with Pleasure, and Delight) and you destroy the Excellence of the best of Poets, rendring their Poems Imperfect, and Lane; and if any Christian Poets makes use of these Gods, there is no fear certainly of their paying them any Veneration, when they only employ them as the Vehicles of their Designs. But enough on this Point.

The other of the Looseness of Amorous Verses; 'tis a part of the Knowledge of the World, to have a perfect view of all the Effects of Love, all its Ways, Manners, and Expressions, and those who forbid the Reading of these, take away an admirable Guide to those that must Live where not to be in Love, or have to do with those that are so, is impossible, and Scandalous ev'n in the Pretence. There are other advantages of the lewdest Essays of this Nature, which a Man of Sense will make of them, and none, indeed, shou'd read those but such. And that *Plato* banish'd Poets out of his Common-Wealth, yet cou'd he write things

of a more lewd Strain than the Worst of 'em,  
witness these Verses on the Kissing of *Agatho* done  
from his Greek by *Desimus Laberius*.

*Dum Semibulco sapia  
Meum Pectus Sarcior  
Dulcemq; florem Spiritus  
Duco ex aperto Tramine  
Anima tunc agra & Saucia  
Cucurrit ad Labia mibi  
Rictumq; in ora pervium  
Et labra pueri Mollia  
Remota Veneri transitus  
Ut transfileret nititur.  
Tum si, morae quid pluscule  
Fuisse in Costa Oscula  
Amoris igni percita  
Transisset, & me linqueres.  
Et mira prorsum res foret,  
Ut ad me ferem Mortuus  
Ad puerum ut intus Viverem.*

*Petronius* himself has scarce gone beyond this  
with his *Gyron*, &c. And his

*Qualis nox fuit illa dii deaq;  
Quam Mollis torcus! haesimus calentes  
Et transfudimus hinc, & hinc tabellis  
Errantes animas. Valete cura!  
Mortalis, ego sic perire capi.*



Plato's Republic was but a *Eutopia* at best, and aim'd at new ways of forming the Minds of Men by Laws, not so agreeable perhaps to Man's Nature, as more Politic Legislators have compos'd, who receiv'd this Noble Art, and honor'd its Professors with Public Veneration; being sensible that it was the surest, and best Instructrix of Mankind, but that it gave Immortality to those that favour'd it with their Protection, and Generosity.

*O sacra, & magnus varum labor, omnia Fato,  
Eripis, & populis donas mortalibus ævum.*

Whoever wou'd raise his Mind above the Vulgar taste, and form in his Breast noble Designs, must apply himself to a reading of the Poets; as *Petrarch* has it.

*Artis severæ si quis amat effectus  
Mentemq; Magnis applicat  
Det primos versibus annos  
Maeniumq; bibat felici pectore fontem.*

As there is a Natural Excellence in being a Poet, so is there in Esteeming one and nothing, shews the Degeneracy of an Age more, in Honor, as well as sense, than a Contempt of this Divine Science, and the true Masters of it. So that I must infer that this Present Age is at a very low Ebb of Both; that, tho' blest'd with as great Poets as ever Greece or Rome produc'd has so very

little regard to them, as not to make Public Sacrifices of its Dross to the Use of Two such Extraordinary Men. There is a *Plebeian* Genius spread among us, and Generous and Noble Acts, are contemn'd and laugh'd at. But then, Sir, in so general a Defect to be Singular in Taste, challenges the more Honor; and this makes me ashamed to offer so unpolish'd and hasty a piece as this at your Feet, who are not only an excellent Judge of the most difficult Thing; and ev'n in the first Bloom of your Youth, have Master'd the whole Circle of the Sciences, but also have a peculiar Esteem for this I plead for, and by your admirable Choice of those you converse with, shew you can let none of your Hours be lost, either with trifling Books in your Study, or Impertinent Coxcombs in your Conversation: I shou'd not have the Vanity to say this, were I so happy as to be often blest'd with your Company, I catch it but now and then unwilling to make you do Penance for my Satisfaction; and this Consideration will oblige me to put an end to this Essay, only desiring your leave publickly to declare my self what I am; That is,

S I R,

Your real Friend and humble Servant.

To Mr. T. S. in Vindication of Mr. Mil-  
ton's *Paradise lost*.

S I R,  
YOU will pardon me, I am confident, tho' in Opposition to your Thoughts, I positively declare my self extreamly well pleas'd with that part of Mr. *Milton's* most excellent Poem, to which you discover the least Inclination: Those *Ancient*, and consequently *less Intelligible Words*, Phrases, and Similies, by which he frequently, and *purposely* affects to express his Meaning, in my Opinion do well suit with the *Venerable Antiquity*, and *Sublime Grandeur* of his Subject. And how much soever some *Untinking* have Condemn'd this his Choice. You, who have Maturely weigh'd, how much deeper an Impression *less us'd*, (so they be what you will grant his always are) *Significant words*, make on a *Reader's* fancy, than such as are *more common*; (you I say) must pay a vast deference to Mr. *Milton's* great *Judiciousness* in this particular, no less than to his *entire Manage* of every part of that *Charming Poem*, in which upon every Occasion he discovers himself a perfect, unimitable *Master of Language*. Here are you forc'd to give a profound Attention to the *Universal Creator*, speaking like *that Almighty*, who by the *Fiat* of his

his Mouth made all things, and yet so Gracious are All his Expressions, as if he valued himself more on his Good-Will to Man, than on his Privilege over him : There, shall you read Man, addressing himself Submissively like a Creature, who owes his Being to a better, wiser, and higher power, and yet not so Abjectly, but you will easily perceive him to be Lord of the whole Creation. Elsewhere, you may see an Angel discovering himself, not a Little Men's Superior by Creation, in Place and Power more, but in Knowledge most of all. In another place, behold Woman, appearing Inferiour to both these, and yet more Ambitious, than either, but then softer, much in her Make and Manners, than her rougher Spouse, whom I dare right Sincerity, and unaffected plainness, seem mostly to Delight. Nor can I now forget with what vast complacency we have oft together read the most Natural, Lively, yet (as their Sexes) different Descriptions, our first Parents, separately make of their own Apprehensions of themselves, at their first finding themselves Living Creatures. Nay, the very fallen Angels are much Honour'd above the best of their deserts, by the Amazing Relation, we there meet with of their Ambition, Malice, Inveteracy, and Cunning ; and never was Scene, so lively shown, as that of his Pandemonium in the first Book. Once more, and you are no less astonish'd at his Description, than he makes the Angels, to be at the Report of their Adversaries Thund'ring Fire-works. And yet, if his Matter requires a *Admirer* Style, how much soever

he



he speaks *Loftily* at one time, at another does, even to a *Miracle*, sult his *speech* to his *Subject*. This ( I well know ) has been censur'd in him for *Servile creeping* ; but if 'tis well consider'd, upon what proper *Occasion* he thus *bumbles* his *Style*, 'twill be *Accounted*, ( as really it is ) his *Great Commendation* : But in praise of Mr. *Milton's* admirable *Dexterity* in this his *Matchless Performance*, since All I can say must come exceeding short of his *due Merit*, that I bring not my self under the *Correction* of that known saying, *Præstat de Carthagine tacere quam pauca dicere*. I shall venture to add no more but this ; tho' the *Composing* such a *complete Poem* on such a no less *Obscure*, than *weighty Subject*, was a *Task* to be perform'd by Mr. *Milton* only, yet 'tis not out of doubt, whether *himself* had ever been able so to Sing of *Unrevealed Heavenly Mysteries*, had he not been altogether depriv'd of his *Outward Sight*, and thereby made capable of such *continued Strains*, *Inward Speculations* : as he who has the use of his *Bodyly Eyes*, cannot possibly become possess'd with. This however must be *Granted*, as indubitably true ; The *hounriful Powers* above, did more than make him amends for their taking away his *Sight*, by so *Illumining* his *Mind*, as to enable him most *completely* to sing of *Matchless Beings*, *Matchless Things*, before *unknown* to, and even *unthought of* by the whole *Race of Men* ; thus rewarding him for a *Temporary Loss*, with an *Eternal Fame*, of which *Envy* it self shall not be able  
ever

ever to deprive this *best of Poems*, for its most  
*Judicious Author*.

*In this Faith I Subscribe my self,*

S I R,

*Yours, &c.*

*To J. H. Esq, In Answer to the Question, Who was the Greatest English-Man.*

S I R,  
**I** Am extremely sensible under how many disadvantages I undertake the Resolution of your demand, *who was the greatest Englishman?* And but that I have this Satisfaction left me, that where the Meanness of my Thought is Inconsistent with the Eminency of his Virtues, and my ill management of the whole, looks like a lessening the Grandeur of his Actions, you will discover at once Goodness enough to pardon me, and to entertain an agreeable Opinion of my *Heroe*, (but for this I say) I had not dar'd thus to expose my own Weakness, and his Worthiness.

S I R,

S I R, *misicilloz and rood bed and goww*  
 I have pitch'd upon *Thomas Cromwell*, Earl of *Essex*, and Viceregent of *England*; for this *Man of Ten Thousand*: A Man, who by his Merit alone rais'd himself from the meanest Condition, to the highest Honour: A Man in nothing unhappy, so much as to have liv'd in the Reign of *Henry the VIII.* of whom it was truly said, "*That he never spar'd Woman in his Lust, or his best Favourite in the Wrath.*" In whose chiefest Esteem our *Cromwell* did yet a long time remain: Admir'd by his Friends, dreaded by his Enemies, carest by all, and in one Word, invested with a more Extensive Power, than any Subject of *England* was ever before, or since possess'd of. He was born at *Putney*, in *Surrey*; where his Father liv'd, an honest *Blacksmith*. In all the little Passages of his Youth, he discover'd an Active Tow'ring Disposition, fond of Traveling, and covetous of Employments, much greater than his Descent, or Education could pretend to; tho' Nature, the better to qualifie him for the *Grandeur*, to which he was design'd, had endow'd him with an apprehensive Wit, a discerning Judgment, a prodigious Memory, a Florid Elocution, and a resolute Soul, not to be discomposed by the greatest Dangers.

By what helps he cross the Seas, I know not; but there I find him in the Year 1510. perfect in many Languages, and after a while associating himself to some Persons, deputed by the Town of *Boston*, to procure them two Pardons, for which

which they had been long Solliciting in vain at *Rome*. *Cromwell* observing that the Delays caus'd by the *Pope's* Ministers, proceeded only from their Griping Disposition, resolv'd by a *Witty* Stratagem to effect that, which by Reason and Importunity he could not: having one day prepar'd some delicious Jellies after the *Englisk* manner, as the *Pope* was returning from Hunting, he approach'd him with these, and a Song, wherewith the *Old Father Julius* being extreamly delighted; upon Enquiry after their Business and Country, he immediately stamp'd their Pardons, and order'd em a Dispatch, having first learnt the Manners of preparing a Dish so agreeable to his *Holiness's* Palate. And this little Contrivance is the more remarkable; for that the Court of *Rome*, which goes beyond all others in *Intriguings*, were hereby fairly Outwitted: He served afterwards in the Duke of *Bourbon's* Army at the Siege of *Rome*, and was in the *French* Camp at the Defeat of *Gatillon*; as yet he had no true Sense of Religion, tho' after his Journey to *Rome*, in which he got the *New Testament* by Heart, he began to be better acquainted with the Principles of *Christianity*. Upon his Return into *England*, finding Cardinal *Wolsey* the only Man in Favour, he enter'd into his Service, and advanced himself therein considerably, by acquitting himself faithfully of all things, wherewith he was intrusted; here he discover'd such forwardness in the suppressing of several *Monasteries*, given by the *King* to the Cardinal his Master for building *Christ's College, Oxon*; as that



that thereby he procur'd himself such abundance of ill Will from the *Superstitious*, as that after the *Cardinals* Fall, he was represented to the *King*, as the worst of Men; and the *King*, the more easily credited, reports against him, because with much Zeal, and as much Ingenuity he pleaded the *Cardinals* Cause in the House of Commons, (of which he was then a Member) and this his Fidelity, to his declining Master, is the more worthy Praise, for that 'tis rare indeed to see any one stand by a *Falling Favourite*.

When *Cromwell* felt the Dissolution of *Wolsey's* Family, he endeavour'd to get into the *King's* Service; which *Sir Christopher Hales*, Master of the Rolls, and my Lord *Russell* happily brought about, tho' the *King* (as has been said) was prepossess'd exceedingly to his disadvantage: My Lord (with a Goodness inseparable from his Family) earnestly solicited his Promotion, not only out of Gratitude (*Cromwell* having sav'd his Life at *Bononia*) but also because he found him most forward to promote a *Reformation* in Religion, to which his Lordship stood well affected; and it was one Great Argument, made use of to move the *King*) to favour him, that he was the most fit of all others to traverse the Intrigues of the *Papish* Clergy. The *King*, after having admitted him to his Presence, ask'd him some Questions, and heard his Complaints against the most Eminent Sticklers for the *Popes* Supremacy: and as a mark of his special Favour, he gave him the Ring from his Finger, and sent him to the Con-

vocation,

*vocation*, which he having the *King's* Signet boldly entred, and seating himself among the *Bishops*, to their great Amazement and Confusion, taxes them with such Crimes as had brought them into such a Premunire, as that thereby (says he) you have forfeited all your Goods, Chattels, Lands, and whatever other Benefits you are possess'd of. By this means he enrich'd the *King's* Coffer with 118840 l. which the Clergy had rais'd by Subsidy, that by Act of *Parliament* they might be quit- ted from the Premunire, into which *Cromwell* demonstrated they had run themselves.

By such ways he Ingratiated himself very much with the *King*; who now conferr'd the Honour of *Knighthood* upon him, made him *Master of the King's Jewel House*, and soon after admitted him into the *Privy Council*; 1524 he was made *Master of the Rolls*, and in the year 1527 he was install'd *Knight of the most Noble Order of the Garter*, and afterwards Created *Earl of Essex*, and *Lord Great Chamberlain of England*; and as the highest Mark of the *King's* Affection and Esteem for him, he was constituted Vicegerent in the *King's* Ablence. Thus being rais'd to the very Pinacle of Honour, like a Politic and Faithful *Statesman*, he was continually studying the Security of the *Government*, and the most proper methods for settling Peace and Tranquility throughout the whole Kingdom; and in order hereunto, he resolv'd upon Correcting the Vices of the Age, encouraging Vertue, establishing Good Orders, and reforming Corruptions: And for that was manifest, there

there would not be wanting great Endeavours to subvert the Government : while *Monasteries* and such like Religious Houses (those Sources of vicious plotting Wretches, whose Interest it was to adhere to the *Pope*) were not destroy'd, he induc'd the *King* to suppress first *Chauntries*, then the *small Monasteries*, and afterwards the *Abbys*, till all the Religious *Fraternities* of that sort in *England* were dissolv'd. And that he might be sure of Success in his Resolution of settling the *Reformed Religion*, (of which he was a zealous Asserter, securing the Professors thereof from the *Popish Bishops* Fury and Rage) he persuades the *King* to ally himself to some *Protestant Prince*; and accordingly a Match was made with the *Lady Ann*, Sister to the Prince of *Cleve*, by whose Protection the *Protestants* were very much Emboldn'd to a more public Profession of their Religion. Thus did he fortunately carry on the *Reformation*, to the larger growth, whereof he gave an extraordinary assistance, by obtaining from the *King* a Grant for publishing the Bible in the *English Tongue*, whereby many were help'd to discern the Fallacies and Heresies of the *Romish Faith*, who before had taken up with what Truth the *Priests* had put upon 'em. Who now are importunate for a *Convocation*, which the *King* summon'd to adjust Matters of Religion; in this Assembly *Cromwell* takes place of all the *Clergy*, by the Title of *Vicar General*, and disputes strenuously for the *Protestant Faith*. But his Zeal on this Account procur'd him not a few considerable Enemies;

mies, of whom Bishop *Gardiner* (the most subtle and inveterate of all others) was still labouring to bring about his ruin, which at length, with a great deal of Joy he thought he saw a fit time for the accomplishment of, and herein, indeed, he was not mistaken. The *King*, by an inconstancy, natural to him, was grown weary of his *Queen*, and his Love was now plac'd upon the Lady *Katherine Howard*; this *Gardiner* observing, took the Liberty to tell the *King*, that 'twas absolutely necessary for the Quiet of the Kingdom, and Security of the Succession, to have an *English Queen*; and at same time, with abundance of Cunning, he instigates the *King* against *Cromwell*, as the sole Cause of his unhappy Marriage with *Q. Ann*; and this so wrought upon his *Majesty*, (who was ever violent in his Love and Hatred) that imagining *Cromwell* was the only Obstacle to the *Repudiation* of his Wife, and his Match with *Katherine*, he so hearkn'd to the Accusations of his *Enemies*, as to give Consent that he should be Arrested: And accordingly by the Duke of *Norfolk* he was Arrested in the *Council Chamber*, and committed to the *Tower*, where he lay not long before he was attainted of High Treason. Some of the *Articles* against him were, "That he had dispersed many Erroneous Books contrary to the Faith of the *Sacrament*; that he had Licens'd many Preachers, suspected of Heresie; that he said he would not turn to the *Pope's* Obedience, tho' the *King* turn'd; but if the *King* did turn, he would fight in person against him; and drawing out his

Dagger,



Dagger, with'd that might pierce him to the Heart if he shou'd not do it; that hearing some Lords were plotting against him, he threaten'd he'd raise great Stirs in *England*. Tho' accus'd both of *Higb Treason* and *Heresie*, his Enemies durst not bring him to a Tryal; but against all *Law* and *Justice* he was condemn'd, while confin'd to the *Tower*; during his Imprisonment he requested one of the *Commissioners*, sent to treat with him, to carry from him a Letter to the *King*; which he refusing with passion, and saying he'd carry no Letter from a *Traitor*: *Cromwell* ask'd him only to deliver a Message from him, and upon his Consent. "You shall recommend me to the *King*, (says *Cromwell*) and let him understand "that by that time he hath so well try'd you, "and thoroughly prov'd you, as I have done, he "shall find you as false a Man, as ever came about "him. In all his adversity he was patient to a Miracle; and when on the 28th of *July* he was brought to the Scaffold, and beheaded on *Tower-Hill*, he behav'd himself with all the Gallantry and Constancy of a Resolv'd *Christian*. He utter'd fervent Prayers, and made a short Speech, wherein he said he dy'd in the *Catholic Faith*, meaning thereby no more (as from his whole Life, and even at his Death, wherein he us'd no *Popish Ceremony*, it must be concluded) than that he dy'd in the true *Christian Catholic Faith*. Thus fell this *Great Man*, and with him for a long time did the *Reformation* seem to lie dead; his Death, who was the chief *Instrument* in it, putting such a

stop to that imperfect work, that not *Cranmer* himself, in that *King's* Reign, cou'd ever afterwards gain any Ground for it: Nay, rather did it decline, for several Preachers of the *Reformed Religion* were burnt in a short time after; by all which it appears, how great a Loss the *Church* sustain'd, in being depriv'd of so able and powerful a Member, who more than any, oppos'd himself with *Great Zeal* against the Impudences and Contrivances of the *Pope's* Subtle and Malicious Agents.

I shall not tire your patience, if I recite a passage or two of this *Brave Man's* extraordinary Generosity. It is but too common for those, who from a low degree, are rais'd to a high Estate, to look with the greatest Contempt upon such, who have most oblig'd them; but our *Cromwell* in the full Enjoyment of all his Dignities, bore himself with a Moderation, peculiar to himself. Witness his taking notice of a poor Woman, who kept a Victualling-House, and had formerly trusted him to the value of 40 *l.* whom espying, as he was riding thro' *Cheapside*, he order'd to be call'd to him; and after having acknowledg'd the Debt, he sent her to his House, discharged that, and gave her an Annual Pension of *Four Pound*, and a *Livery* during Life. But what follows is much more remarkable; As he was riding with some Nobles to the *King's* Palace, he saw one footing it in the Streets, whom he thought he knew, immediately ord'ring his whole Train to await him; he lights off his Horse, upon Enquiry, finding him the Man he took him for, he embraces the *Mean Stranger*; and

and to the Wonderment of all about him, invites him to Dinner : his haste at that time prevented a longer stay; and therefore he left the *amazed Stranger*, who Enquiring his Name of my Lord's Attendants, began to be troubled with the reflections which this *unexpected Accident* gave him. *Cromwell*, who had stay'd some time with the King, at his return home, finds him attending in the Court Yard, where again Embracing him, he takes him to his Table, and after some time finding the Lords who accompanied him, no less surpriz'd at his Condescension than was the Stranger : he makes 'em this Relation; *You wonder to see me thus Obliging, but you will be more amaz'd when I tell you I am more Indebted to this Very Man, than to the whole World beside; for after the defeat of Gatillion, I came to Florence so needy, that being forced to beg an Alms, this Worthby Merchant Mr. Francis Frescobald seeing I know not what in my Face that pleas'd him upon Enquiry of what Country I was, pitying me in my Necessity, he took me home, and gave me a Suit of Apparel, a Horse and 16 Ducats of Gold to bear my Expences to England; and now turning him about to Mr. Frescobald, And what, Dear Friend, (says he) has brought you hither? The generous Merchant after he had recover'd himself out of the amaze this happy Providence cast him into, told him, That he was become so Poor by his vast Losses, that of all the Wealth he formerly enjoy'd, but 15000 Ducats were left him, and they were Owing him here, and hard to be Got too: Cromwell, after he he had obtain'd a List of his Debtors, sent a Ser-*

vant of his own, in his Name, to Demand those Sums for the *Merebant* : After Dinner, taking his *Friend* apart, he gave him first 16 *Ducats* for those he had receiv'd, then 10 for his Apparrel, and 10 more for his Horse, and at last he Gave him *Four* Bags, each quantity 400 *Ducats* for Interest : after all, he passionately requested his stay in *England*, offering to lend him 60000 *Ducats* for 4 Years to Trade withal ; but *Frescobald* having by *Cromwell's* Authority, obtain'd all his Money (preferring before all his *Native Country*) after a thousand Acknowledgements made him, return'd for *Florence*, with a *due Sense* of this so Extraordinary and Generous Entertainment.

But I am afraid, Sir, I grow too much upon your Patience, and therefore will shut up with the Character Archbishop *Cranmer* gave him in a Letter to the *King* on his Behalf—— *I have found* (says he) *that my Lord Cromwell has always lov'd you above all things, and Serv'd you with such Fidelity, and Success, that I believe no King of England had Ever a better Minister, and it is my Wish, that your Majesty may find a Counsellor who both can and will discharge his Trust as my Lord Cromwell hath done.*

But alas, nothing could move that *Inexorable Prince*, who rather than forego his unlawful *Lust* to the Lady *Howard* (whom he dar'd not Marry while *Cromwell* liv'd) Sacrificed this his *Darling Favorite*. And tho' it adds Greatly to my Lord *Cromwell's* Fame, that after his Death, he was most passionately bewail'd by the *King*, who frequently



quently cry'd out for his *Cromwell*. Yet was not this a due Reparation to *England* for the Loss of such an *Extraordinary Man* whose *Virtues* were so *Singular*, his *Services* so *Signal*, both to the *Nation* in *General*, and to the *Reformation* in particular: whose *Zeal* to *God* was so *True*, whose *Temperance* so *Constant* in all *Conditions*; who (in one word) was possess'd of a *Courage* so *undaunted*, and a *Fidelity* so *rare*, that I make no doubt you will with me *Conclude*, a *Man* *Endow'd* with all these, and many more *Excellent Qualifications*, well deserves the *Title* of the *Greatest Englishman*, which therefore I affix to *Thomas Cromwell* the *Great Earl of Essex*, and so conclude,

S I R,

*Yours, &c:*

J. J.

*Cloe to Urania, against Womens being  
Learn'd.*

I Have, my dear *Urania*, so ill defended the Cause you always espouse, that *Lysander* has convinc'd me that *Learning* is not for our Sex; but before I make an entire delivery of my Judgment to his Arguments; I thought fit to send them, as well as I can remember them, to *Urania*,

to see what influence they'll have on her ; and how she'll defend the Point against an Opponent, she has often so well handl'd without one.

*Lyfander* will have it, That *Learning* in common Prudence ought by the Men to be deny'd us ; since it wou'd not only make us proud, and imperious ; and aspire to the command over Men ; which, as we might by such Auxiliary force easily obtain, the Charms of the Body alone giving us too great an Ascendant over Men ; so we shou'd not want the desire of obtaining it, having got the means. Secondly, That since, as he will have it, we were design'd by God for Obedience, not Rule ; to be instructed by our Husbands, and to study only Household Affairs, it wou'd be Impious to raise us from the Office Nature had allotted us, to a Nobler Station. Thirdly, That Learned Women are seldom Chast, Learning disposing 'em to Inconstancy, and Infidelity to their Husbands in longing for foreign Embraces, and that betwixt a Womans Desire and Act, there is nothing but Opportunity.

This, in short, is the Substance of what he urg'd tho' with more advantageous Circumstances of a fine turn of words, and several Examples to confirm his Assertions, which whether true or false, I cannot determine. But one thing I must not forget ; that he much urg'd a Book call'd, *Advice to a Daughter*, the Authority of which was too much Establish'd for me to Condemn. I leave the whole to the Judicious, and Ingenious *Urania*, whom I, and ev'ry one must own the best Advocate

Advocate for our Sex. But tho' I'll never dispute that Prize with you, yet I shall always that of which of us is the best Friend, and you must confess, that I am without reserve your Sincere, and Faithful

*Cloe.*

*An Answer to the foregoing Letter in  
Defence of Womens being Learn'd.*

URANIA to CLOE.

I Receiv'd yours, my Charming *Cloe*, the beginning of the last Week, but the Niceness of the Subject, wou'd not permit me to send you an immediate Answer, being too much, at that time, taken up with other Affairs; but having now got an Hour to my self, I shall cursorily consider the weight of *Lyfander's* Objections.

*Lyfander*, I must confess, is a Man of a great deal of Wit, and delivers his Arguments on any Subject with that address, that they appear much stronger from his Mouth, than in Writing; yet I must assure you, nothing I have yet seen of his carries so little weight, as what you have sent me; which shews how bad a Cause he had undertaken, since it cou'd only furnish him with such weak Supports, as he has produc'd. And I'm confident,  
your

your Love for *Lysander*, brib'd your Judgment to his side, which you have too much of to submit to such feeble Reasonings.

*Learning*, he tells you, will add fresh Pride to our Sex, and kindle an Ambition in us of Commanding over that of Man, which we should certainly pursue, assisted with so powerful an Auxiliary, since with these Charms Nature has bestow'd on our Bodies, we go so far already, and discover a desire of an absolute Mastery.

This is so Cobweb, and Valgar a Sophism, that I'm amaz'd to hear it from the Mouth of *Lysander*. Is he Ignorant of the Nature of Learning? or, is he not very sensible that it teaches one to know ones self? the consequence of which must certainly, in any Woman of sense, produce Humility, not Pride: It furnishes us with Masculine, nay, Divine Thoughts, that are equally serviceable to our selves, and Husbands. It makes us condemn the designing Flatteries of Men, when they deifie that Beauty, which vanishes in a moment, and which Fools preserve with so much Care, for a Bait, and Snare to both their own and their Admirers Ruin. Learning teaches *Wisdom*, which can never render us so opposite to the Establish'd *Oeconomy* of the World, as to make us once think so wildly, as to attempt the inverting so prevalent, and inveterate a Custom as the Sovereignty of the Men. Besides, Nature has form'd us too weak, to effect a Revolution that depends on the Force, and Strength of Body, as well as Mind; since Politics are meer useless Theories,



ories, without Able Hands to put 'em in Execution. But if we must needs suppose this mighty Revolution effected, who would not be willing to be Subject to so agreeable a Power, in which *Wisdom*, and *Beauty* join'd. But, my *Cloe*, does *Lyfander* forget that a great many Women without Learning direct their Husbands, and have a very awful influence over them; but Learning would qualifie that extraordinary Ascendant, by making that *Rational*, which was before only the blind Effect of Passion and Fondness.

*Lyfander's Second Objection*, That *Women were by their Creator design'd for Obedience not Rule; to be instructed by their Husbands, not to instruct them; and to Study nothing but their Household Affairs.*—

Partly depends of what has been said to the first. Tho', by the way, *Lyfander* makes a little bold with the Secrets of the Almighty in that Assertion, tho' I confess, the Curse that was laid on *Eve* for her Transgression, might give him occasion to say so, tho' it prove directly the contrary, as my *Viridomar*, has formerly observ'd; for if Woman was created the Subject, and Vassal of Man, it had been no Punishment to've inflicted that Subjection on her.

But, my *Cloe*, I think 'tis evident, that Learning will not lessen that Obedience it teaches them; which will therefore make them practice it as a Duty of Reason, not Custom, and Imposition, two weighty and provoking Motives of Opposition. As to the Second Branch of this Objection, *viz.* *That we are to be instructed by our Husbands, &c.*  
Learning

Learning save's a Husband that's capable, the Labor; and the Husband that is not, the Shame of attempting what he's not able to perform; And by giving him an Emulation of his Wives Virtues, make him endeavour not to be out-done by a Woman, in Masculine, and Rational Excellencies, by improving his Mind with Nobler Qualifications; and not wholly devote himself to such sordid Employments, and Diversions, which are generally the whole Business and Entertainment of too many Gentlemen; I mean, the Bottle, the Whore, the Dice, with Hunting, Hawking, Courting, and the rest of that wretched Train, as if they were born never to think.

I come now to *Lysander's* last Objection, which is indeed the most infamous of all the Scandals he endeavours to throw on Learned Women, viz. that their Knowledge makes 'em seldom Chast, and breeds in 'em wandering Desires. — Were this true, I must own it a very Substantial Argument, and I shou'd yield that all my Sex shou'd be kept from the use of Books as cautiously, as Madmen from Edge-Tools. But, my Cloe, the Assertion is too general to be true, to which I my self cou'd bring not a few Exceptions. The instances he produc'd, tho' you doubt, yet to please him I'll admit, supposing therefore that such and such Learned Women have been Whores, it still remains, that he prove this was the effect of their Learning, not Nature, and that if they had not been Learned, they wou'd not a' been Whores. *A Task, not so easily perform'd.* But since a bold Assertion is no proof

proof of any thing, it may be justly confronted with an opposite. I shall therefore affirm, That those Women, who, tho' Learn'd, are Whores, wou'd be much more prostitute without it; for tho' those Inclinations, Nature and Constitution have given 'em, are not always entirely overcome by Learning, yet are the violence of them regulated, and reduc'd to a greater Moderation. 'Tis not to be deny'd, That Learning being very uncommon in Woman, when 'tis found in one, it draws a more Numerous Train of Addressees from the Men; but were it more common, they wou'd by being divided, be more easily resisted: Nay, the very Motive wou'd be taken away, by the commonness of Learned Women, the rarity of which, is the chief bait on these occasions.

Having thus run through *Lyfander's* formidable Troop of Arguments, I shall add a pleasant Fancy of my own, which is, That the Practice of admitting Women to the Arts and Sciences, wou'd convince the Infidels of the *Jewish* and *Turkish* Perswasion, that Women have Souls, since they were not wholly taken up with the Ornament, and care of the Body only, and then we might hope an equal Share in the Paradice of *Mabomet*, with the Men, and not be shut out of the Synagogue by the Rabbi's.

But that I may wholly obviate all your Scruples, I shall say one word now to that celebrated Book of the *Advice to a Daughter*, designing at a better opportunity to give a fuller Answer to a Book I have very little Esteem for.

I can

I can never admit that an implicit Faith is more excusable in our Sex, than in his; because I can by no means discover, that what he advances carries any thing of Reason with it. These are his Words. —

*As to your particular Faith, keep to the Religion that is grown up with you, both as it is the best in it self, and that the Reason of stayng in it on that Account, is somewhat stronger for your Sex, than it will perhaps be allow'd to be for ours, in respect of the voluminous Enquiries into Truth by reading, are less expected from you. —*

Here you find a flourish of words indeed, but in my poor opinion, no very weighty Sense. The stress of the whole lyes on a false support; I mean, the corrupt Custom of the Age; *which*, he says, *will not Expect* Our reading, and search after the most Material of Truths, that this Life is given us for; if Truth be obscur'd by so many Volumes, 'tis the fault of those in whose hands it has so long been reserv'd. If it be a Truth that is also necessary for our Future Happiness to be rightly inform'd in; 'tis certainly equally our Duty to enquire into it; and they are to blame who deprive us of the fittest means, *Learning*: and if it be an incumbent Duty, 'twill be but a weak, and poor Excuse for continuing in an Error, because we were bred in one; Besides, this wou'd hold on all sides, and must of Consequence be very fallacious; and I must needs add, That whatever Figure a Lady wou'd make, by the Direction of this Advice, in the Court, she wou'd make but a  
very



very indifferent one in Reason. But 'tis evident, that he is not in earnest, when a little after he prescribes a quite contrary Rule — *Let me recommend to you (says he) a Method of being Rightly inform'd, which can never fail; 'tis in short this — Get Understanding, and practice Virtue, &c.* Now how she should get this *Understanding* he leaves her, and us in the Dark; tho' I am confident it can never be obtain'd to a degree of being *Rightly inform'd* without Learning; unless he would have it by Inspiration, which I humbly presume, is none of the most solid *Understandings* in our Age.

But my charming Friend, I have detain'd you too long this bout to say any more on this Subject, or Book, when we meet I'll give you more of my Sentiments, which nothing cou'd make me so free of imparting, but the Pleasure I have to please such a Friend; tho' I shall never yield to you in sincerity, or any other Duties that are ow'd to *Cloe*, by

*Her faithful Friend,*

Urania.

Some

*Some Reflections on Mr. Rymer's Short  
View of Tragedy, and an Attempt  
at a Vindication of SHAKESPEAR,  
in an Essay directed to JOHN  
DRYDEN Esq.*

AS soon as Mr. Rymer's Book came to my Hands, I resolv'd to make some *Reflections* upon it, tho' more to shew my *Will* than my *Abilities*. But finding Mr. Dennis had almost promis'd the World a Vindication of the Incomparable *Shakespear*, I quitted the Design, since he had got a Champion more equal to his Worth; not doubting but Mr. Dennis wou'd as effectually confute our *Hypercritic* in this, as all Men must grant he has, in what he attempted in his *Impartial Critic*.

But expecting thus long, without hearing any farther of it; I concluded some other more *important*, or at least more agreeable business, had diverted him from it; or that he thought it an *unnecessary Undertaking*, to perswade the Town of a Truth it already receiv'd; or to give any farther Answer to a Book, that carry'd its own Condemnation in its self. However, since I find some build an Assurance on this *General Silence* of all the Friends of *Shakespear*, that Mr. Rymer's Objections are unanswerable; I resolv'd to bestow two or three days on an Essay to prove the contrary:

trary : Which may at least bring this advantage to the *Cause*, to convince the World how very good it is, when one of my *Inability*, in so little time, have so much to say for it, and that without going through the whole Defence.

I indeed, like the most *indifferent* Counsel, make the *Motion*, but leave more able Heads to *Plead* the Cause. One great Satisfaction, I have (however I succeed) is, that I speak before a Judge that is the best Qualify'd to decide a Controversie of this Nature, that ever *England* produc'd; for in you, Sir, The *Poet*, and The *Critic* meet in their highest Perfection; and, if the *Critic* discover the Faults of *Shakespeare*, The *Poet* will also see, and admire his Beauties, and Perfections. For as you have Learning, and strong Judgment to discern his least Transgressions, so have you a Genius that can reach his Noblest Flights; and a Justice that *will* acknowledge his Deserts: And were there no other Arguments to be brought in his Vindication, it wou'd be more, than sufficient to destroy all his weak Antagonist has huddl'd together against him, that you give him your Approbation. This, Sir, is *really* my Opinion, and I'm sure the most sensible Lovers of Poetry will side with me in it: and secure me from the Imputation of being so foolishly vain, to think I *Can* flatter You, when I speak of your *Poetry*, your *Judgment*, and your *Candor*; since whatever can be said on that Subject, by any one below Mr. *Dryden's* Abilities, wou'd be but a very faint Shadow of the *Mighty Panegyric* of your *Name* alone.

The Method I shall observe in these *Reflections* (for my time will not permit me to bring so confus'd a Chaos into a more regular Form) will be first to run over the Pages of his Book as they lye, and give you some Animadversions in-part of those Absurdities they contain; for to examine all, wou'd swell my Letter into a Volume, and be five hundred times as big as the Text, like a certain Reverend Dr. on *Job*. Next, I shall attempt a Vindication of *Shakespear*, where he more formerly attacks him.

In the first, I hope you'll forgive me, if I use him with no more Respect, than he does *Shakespear* or *You*: And in the latter, I hope you will admit *Recriminations* on those Patterns, he proposes to us for the Test, of *Shakespear's* Faults, as a sufficient Answer to what he Magisterially lays down, as *Self-Evident*, with a Scornful, tho' *Clumsy* Jest; without any other Reason to confirm it; if not as a *Demonstration* of that Injur'd Poet's Excellence. And that we may from thence conclude with Mr. Rymer (as he has it in his Preface to *Rapin*) since his *Standards of Perfection* are equally culpable, That *the greatest Wits, both Modern, and Ancient, sometimes slip, and are liable to Cavils*: And by consequence, that all his Pains were needless to bring *Shakespear* into that Number, since his greatest Admirers ever confess'd he had Faults: Tho' no Man but himself, I believe, ever *Rob'd* him of *all* Excellence; And I must say, That most that he produces are meer *Cavils*, and convict him of being one of those

*Critics,*



*Critics, that like Wasps rather annoy the Bee's, than terrifie the Drones.*

But, indeed, the Lovers of *Shakespear* may well forgive the Author of *Edgar*, and this *Short view of Tragedy*, whatever he can say against his *Excellence and Genius*; since being his Opposite, 'tis no wonder his Mind's not capacious enough to Comprehend, nor his Taste Poetical enough to relish the Noble Thoughts which the Ingenious have admir'd in *Shakespear* ever since he Writ.

It has been the Fate of most Critics on Poetry, to Err in those Things they Condemn in others, or to discover by their Writing, how ill qualify'd they are to judge of any thing, but the Regularity of the Structure of a Poem, which the *Known* Rules of Art furnish them with, the chief formation of a Poet being wanting; Nature denying them the *Droitem Venam*. *Petronius Arbitr*, so severe on *Lucan*, and *Seneca* (for on them he reflects in his *Satyricon*) kept not clear of that unnatural Affectation he condemn'd in them. *Joseph* and *Julius Scaliger* (as *Rapin* observes) had the Art, but wanted the supply of Nature when they attempted Poetry. But *Mr. Rymer*, in any thing he has yet publish'd, has not the least shadow of pretence to the Excellence of either of these. *Petronius* had Wit, had Fire, a Genius, and Language; and tho the *Scaligers* were not Poets, yet had they the Merits of pretty good Critics; but this Gentleman has scarce produc'd one Criticism, that is not borrow'd from *Rapin*, *Dacier*,

or *Bossu*, and mis-apply'd to *Shakespear*. And for his Poetry, from the *Heroic Tragedy* of *Edgar*, to the *River Soundg*, he discovers not the least Genius, nor Taste of it; and therefore must be granted a very incompetent Judge of such a Poet as *Shakespear* is.

Some of my Friends, whose Authority was very great with me, wou'd needs have me examine *Edgar*; but there were two things that obstructed my compliance with them—The First, That it was so abominably stor'd with Opium, that I cou'd not possibly keep my Eyes open to read it attentively; The other, That 'twas such a Banter in it self on Poetry and sense, that all the pains I cou'd take about it, wou'd be only to give him the vanity of imagining it worth any Man's taking Notice of.

The Piece now under our Consideration is in a Vein something more merry, and uncommon; for tho' 'tis frequent enough to meet with a dull Poetaster for a *Poet*, yet 'tis something more rare to encounter a jolly Droll for a *Critic*. Tho', that with the abundance of *Ill Nature*, *Conceit*, and *Affectation* of appearing a Scholar, is the *Vehicle* that carries off his *Nonsense*, with as ill Judges of that, as he is of *Poetry*, and makes them take it for an extraordinary Thing: and this will make the better excuse for my examining how very Monstrous a *Fantom* 'tis, that is set out in so formidable an Equipage.

To pass over the *Epistle Dedicatory*, which like *Bays* his Prologues, may serve as well for any other Book

Book as this, nay — and for any other Lord too, as well as the Noble Lord 'tis address'd to (whose generous Patronage of all that have any Merit in the Republic of Letters, ought to have secur'd him from such a Prophanation) And what's more, will do e'ery jot as well, for an *Advertisement* to the Courteous Reader, as for an *Epistle Dedicatory*, it being a *Medley* of Stuff without *Coherence*, *Design*, or *English*. But to examine all that's *Unintelligible*, *false English*, and *absurd*, wou'd be an *Herculean Labor*, and extend my Considerations to e'ery Line. I shall begin with the Work its self, not less *abrupt*, or *inconsistent*.

He begins with the Necessity of a *Chorus*, urging, That, as 'twas the the Original, so 'tis the most Essential part of a *Tragedy*, because it keeps the Poet, to the Unities of time, and place: But 'tis evident, from the *Suppliants* of *Euripides* (as you, Sir, have formerly observ'd) and from *Racines Hester*, (as Mr. Dennis has noted) that the *Chorus* does not necessarily do what Mr. Rymer pretends; nor was it at all in *Horace's* Thoughts, if we may judge of them by the Precepts he gives about it in his Art of Poetry.

But Mr. Dennis having evidently clear'd this Point, I shall say no more of it; but that if, as our Critic contends, 'tis the Poet's incumbent Duty to gratifie the Eyes, as well as Ears; this must be done without offending against *Nature*, and *Probability*, as the *Chorus* does. (which is abundantly prov'd by the *Impartial Critic*). But by those who have a more necessary Relation to

the Action and Fable, as the *Senators of Venice* in *Othello*, whom he reflects on; tho' as they have a Necessary concern in the Play, so cou'd they not be introduc'd without their Habits, which afford that Gratification to the Eye he makes the Duty of every Poet, without the help of so foreign, and unnatural a Thing as a *Chorus*.

The 34. and 41<sup>st</sup>. Pages are almost unintelligible, and at cross purposes one Paragraph with another; for he will have it, That the words of *Shakespeare* do not set off the Action, and then of a sudden he concludes the contrary, that they do. Next, P. 6. he has an admirable fetch, to prove that *Pronunciation* is a notable *Vehicle*, to carry off *Nonsense*, by shewing that it set off the *Sense* of *Demosthenes*. 'Tis granted, That a good and true *Pronunciation*, is a great help to *Sense*, because it sets it in its proper Light, as ill repeating sets it in a false one, and makes it lose its lustre; as *Marial* sensibly observes to *Fidentinus*.

*Quem recitat mens est, & Fidentine libellus.*

*Sed Male dum recitat incipit esse tuus.*

But it seems to me, That the Reason, which makes Good *Pronunciation* set off *Sense*, must make *Nonsense* more visible, for the giving every Word, and Sentence its true *Emphasis*, must make the blunder more obvious, to even those, who in the Reading wou'd perhaps over look it. I grant that the Pomp of the Theatre may, perhaps, dull the edge of our Judgment, but *Pronunciation* never can.



can. But were all this true, I can't find that **Shakespear** falls justly under his Censure, as to this particular; for he affirms, That *Shew*, *Action*, and *Pronunciation*, lose their force under a serious Perusal; yet after such a Penial, **Shakespear** does still maintain his Reputation with the greatest Genius's our Nation has produc'd in Poetry. His Excellence therefore is not built on those Supports, but *innate Words*, and by Consequence all his incoherent bustle is to very little purpose.

But the next Proof of the power of *Shew*, *Action*, and *Pronunciation*, is extremely merry. P. 8. He tells us, That Cardinal *Richelieu* was by them influenc'd in his mighty Approbation of the Tragedy of *Sir Thomas Moor*, tho' there were neither Poetry, nor Sense in it. Yet were not these able to byass his nice Taste to favour the *Cid* of *Corneil* (who had more of a Poet, than one of our *Flecko's* Clafs) which places the Cardinal in the *Majores Numero*, of the Division of Judges made by *Horace*, clear contrary to our *Critic's* intention. Well, I must say this for him, That tho' his *Reasons* and *Observations* are far from irrefragable, yet his *Rambles* are admirable and unaccountable from a Comical Harangue against *Opera's*, P. 9, 10, 11, 12. he runs to *Verse burlesq*; and how long it had been in *Italy* before it pass'd the *Alps*, I suppose, to shew us he had read *Pelisson*, quoted in the Margin, for the Devil a-bit had it to do with the Business in hand. Thence with another leap, he jumps back again to *Es-*

*chylus* his *Persians*, proposing it for a Model proportion'd to our English Capacities. Of which, Page the 13th. having drawn in imitation in the Spanish Expedition of 1588. our *Tragedo didasculus* dubs it the *Invincible Armada*. His draught indeed is very nice and circumstantial, in the very serious, and at the same time extreamly *Ridiculous* Account of all the Incidents of this Draught to the very Beards of the Spanish Grandees; the Tuns of *Tar Barrels* for the *Heretics*; and the squabbling of the *Cabinet Council*, about Preferments not yet in their Power. And is it not as great an Error in *Manners*, as any *Shakespeare* is guilty of in the worst of his Plays, to make the greatest Politicians of that Age such egregious Coxcombs? But what wretched Mortal is there of so very sorrowful or morose a temper, that must not laugh to hear him say, That on this Occasion two Competitors have juster Occasion to work up, and shew the Muscles of their Passion, than *Shakespeare*, *Cassius*, and *Brutus*? Could any Pugg in *Barbary* be so ignorant of common Sense and Reason as this? he must Pardon, the Expression, 'tis his own to a much greater Man, than himself.

'Tis true, he tells us with his usual *Magisterial* Assurance, That these Spanish Grandees of his Creation, have a juster Occasion for a Passionate Scene than *Shakespeare*, *Brutus*, and *Cassius*: But I must ask his Pardon if I subscribe not to his Opinion; But to punish him sufficiently for this gross Absurdity, and Arrogance, lay down the matter.

matter barely as 'tis, proposing the *Occasions* just as they lye in both these Authors, our *Historiographer*, I mean, and the inimitable *Shakespeare*.

First, Here is a Council of 15 of the greatest, old Politic Heads that Age produc'd in Spain, quarrelling with one another about things out of possession, in *Eutopia*, To be Kings of *Man*; Duke-*Trincalos*, and Duke-*Stephanos*, &c. is there either Nature or Possibility of this? so far is it from any probable Ground.

On the other hand: Here is *Cassius*, a *Passionate*, *Ambitious*, and *Avaritious* Roman, impatient to bear a refusal of a Request he made for *Lucius Pella*, that was found guilty of *Bribery* (a Crime himself was guilty of) looking on himself of equal Power at least with *Brutus*, and a Brother, if not Father of the War, being *Ambitious* and *Choleric* too, as I said, cou'd not but resent it as an infringing his Authority, and Friendship; and by consequence discover his Resentment at first meeting. But this is not all the Ground of this Scene: Here is *Brutus* on the other hand, a severe follower of *Virtue*, to which he Sacrific'd his Friend and Father, *Cæsar*, and cou'd not therefore but resent *Cassius's* deviating from *Virtue*, his pretence to which made him his Friend. How cou'd he bear with *Cassius* in his *Bribery* and *Avarice*, who cou'd not with *Cæsar's* *Ambition*? for in denying Money for the Payment of those Legions (on whose Fidelity, not only their Lives, but the *Fate*, and *Liberty* of *Rome*, which was yet dearer to *Brutus*, depended) he gave them up to *Octavius* and *Anthony*. Is

Is there any Parallel indeed betwixt these two Occasions? Can there be any thing more Childish and trifling, than the first? And can there be any thing greater, and more weighty than the latter? The Prize of Chymera's on one side, and the Liberty, and Fate of the greatest Empire in the World; nay, Life, Honor, Virtue, and all that can or ought to be dear on the other.

Let this be a convincing proof of the *Genius* and *Judgment* of our *Historiographer Royal*, who could prefer his own dull Burlesque on Common Sense to this incomparable Scene of *Shakespear*, which is justly admitt'd by all Men of Sense.

But to proceed, If *Desdemona's* Character be below the dignity of *Tragedy*, what are these *Spanish Segniora's*, who are to spend a whole Act in telling of Dreams; which were likely to have so mighty influence on the *Spanish Politicians*, (always noted for their Religion and Bigottry) as to furnish out *Distractions and Disorders enough for an Act*. The Draught of the next Act is e'ery jot as merry: for 'tis very Natural indeed, and nicely according to *Manners*, to bring in a King *Philosophizing on Dreams*, and *Hobgoblins*! unless he were to be such a King as he so much admires in the *Rebearsal*; for a King *Phiz*, by his former Profession, might be suppos'd to have some *Notable*, if not *Noble Thoughts* (as our *Critic* requires) on the Matter.

The 16th. Page, is a brief, tho' fully as ridiculous summing up of what he had said at large before, tho' the Fourth Act is above measure Comical,



mical, where the *Spaniard* is to be beaten off with a *Vanguard of Dreams and Goblins*, and the *Terrors of the Night*.

For my part, on the first reading it, I thought him absolutely out of his Wits, or what's all one, that he had a Mind to be lewdly merry extreamly out of Season, or Play the Droll, to shew how much he was better qualify'd for a *Farcewright*, than a *Critic*. But being assur'd since by several Ingenious Gentlemen, that he not only means it as a serious thing, but that the Doctors do not think him Mad enough for *Bedlam*, I will turn the Advice he has the extraordinary Assurance to give you, infinitely more justly to himself, that he wou'd underrake the Writing upon this admirable Plot; and for his Encouragement, I assure him, it shall not run the Fate of his *Edgar*, but be Acted; with a firm belief, that if it do not *Pit-box and Gallery* it with any of *Shakespears*; yet it may *bear the Bell* (to borrow an extraordinary Phrase from our *Historiographer Royal*) from the *Devil of a Wife*, or *Dr. Faustus*; because the very *excessive* Extravagance of the Thought might make us laugh, whereas *Edgar* cou'd provoke nothing but Sleep.

But his putting this on you, Sir, after so many Public Expressions of your Friendship for him, & private Services (as I'm inform'd) done him, shews his Morals, as faulty, as the *Manners* he has laid down for the *Heroes* of this *Anti-Tragedy*. With what Face cou'd he put so little and scurrilous an Affront on you, in this Book, without provocation,  
who

who in his Preface to *Rapin*, did prefer your Description of Night to all the Master strokes of the Ancients, and Moderns. If you had no other merits certainly the *Judgment of Virgil animated with a more sprightly Wit*, deserv'd better from him than so mean, and so ungenerous an Abuse. But now to the next Chapter.

To shew he had read *Plato*, he quotes him P. 18. to prove what no body yet ever deny'd that knew any thing of the Original of *Tragedy*. Nor has any one, that I ever met with, pretended that there was no Poem, that had the Name of *Tragedy* before the time of *Thespis*. But if from hence he wou'd infer that Tragedy was Acted before his time, he proceeds farther, than the words of *Plato*, or any other Authority will warrant him; for till *Thespis*, it was only a Hymn to *Bacchus*, Sung and Perform'd in Dances, and Gesticulations by the *Chorus*. But then it had no Episode or Actor; and therefore *Thespis* was the Original of the *Tragedies*, that are Acted, tho' he built it on the Foundation of the religious *Goat-Song*; this, not only *Horace*, but all the Critics, I have met with, affirm. And himself confesses, P. 19. that when it came to be an Image of the World, it then had a secular Alloy, and was by Consequence alter'd from what it was before, that is, from a *Religious Hymn*, to a *Representation of Humane Life*. The End therefore and Aim of it being thus alter'd, the Mediums to that End, must of Consequence, be alter'd too. The praise of *Bacchus* was no more Necessary to forming

ming an Image of Humane Life, than the Praise of *Hercules*, or any other of the Gods. Now, if the *Chorus* be necessary, because 'twas the Original of *Tragedy*, 'tis equally necessary the *Chorus* shou'd celebrate the Praise of *Bacchus*, as it originally did; but if *Tragedy* by the Alteration of its end were set on a new bottom, we are no longer oblig'd to regulate it according to its first Institution. So that I can see no reason, that because *Sophocles* retain'd the *Chorus*, it was therefore a necessary part of *Tragedy*, or if it be, why the Dancing and Music that was continu'd with it, was any more meer Religion, than the *Chorus* its self, or a less necessary part of *Tragedy*, since both were of equal date, as to their Rise, and End. But this only *en passant*.

P. 20. Next, he leaps to the Care the Government had of the *Theatre*, in permitting no Poet to present a Play to the House till past Thirty: This Observation might, perhaps, proceed from Self-Interest, hoping to perswade us, that, upon another Vacancy, he is qualify'd for *Poet Laureat*, intimating, that the older a Man grows, the fitter he is for a Poet, contrary to the Judgment of his Friend *Rapin*; from whom he borrows the Observation that the *Athenians* spent more of the Public Money about their *Chorus's*, and other *Decorations* of the *Stage*, than in all their Wars with *Persia*. From hence he soon passes to his beloved *Aristophanes* (and to do him Justice, he always expresses an extraordinary Passion for *Farces*) tho' I am to seek in what he drives at in all

all those Praises he bestows on him, for *Running a Muc*, (as he phrases it) at all manner of Vice where-ever he saw it, be it in the greatest Philosophers, the greatest Poets, the Generals, or the Ministers of State. Would he have our Poets follow his example, and expose our Divines, Bishops, Lords, Generals, and Ministers of State? If this be his desire, yet either he ought not to blame them for their Defect in that, or is in Justice bound to secure them from the Penalties, they wou'd incur by doing so: *Scan. May.* and some such odd things are Bug-bears, that wou'd have frighten'd his *Aristophanes*, from his freedom, if the *Athenian Law*, like ours, had secur'd Vice, and Folly in the Great ones, from the attacks of Poets. He ought therefore either to moderate his Indignation at our Poets for only exposing the Common Life of Mankind, or if he wou'd have none but Statesmen, and Generals ridicul'd, let him lead the Dance; and fear not the Success of *Aristophanes*, being so well qualify'd for a *Farce-Wright*; his Propensity to that, influencing perhaps his Judgment in favour of this Greek Poet, above all those that succeeded him. Tho' *Quintilian*, as good a Judge as Mr. Rymer says of *Menander*, not *Aristophanes*, *meo judicio diligenter lectus, ad cuncta quæ præcipimus efficienda sufficit, ita omnium imaginem in vitâ Expressit. Tanta in eo inveniendi Copia, eloquendi facultas, ita omnibus Rebus, Personis, affectibus accommodatus, ut omnibus ejusdem operis Autoribus tenebras obduxerit.* But Mr. Rymer must be singular in his Opinion, or he cou'd not keep up his Character, as he is in the meaning



meaning of those two Verses he quotes, *Pag. 25.*

*Non minimum meruere decus, vestigia Græcæ,  
Ausî deserere, & celebrare Domestica facta.*

He will have it, that *non Minimum* is but a faint Commendation; tho' 'tis evident from the best of the Latin Authors, that *non Minimum* is us'd for *Magnum*, if not *Maximum*. 'Tis perhaps us'd by *Horace* as a more Modest expression of their Worth, that he might not incur the imputation of flattering by a stronger Praise, those who were living. But I desire him to produce *non Minimum* in *Cicero*, or any other Author of Note, in a sense less than *Magnum*. Nor does that Quotation out of the Sixth Book of *Virgil's Æneids*, prove at all that *Virgil* gave up the Cause, and yielded the *Grecians* more excellent in Poetry than the *Latins*, any more than *Horace* did in the Epistle by him quoted, for thus it runs,

*Excudent alii spirantia mollius æra,  
Credo quidem, vivos ducent de mure in vultus;  
Orabunt causas melius, cæliq; meatus,  
Describent radio, & surgentia sidera dicent.  
Tu Regere imperio populos Romane memento;  
(Hæ tibi erunt Artes) pacisq; imponere Morem,  
Parcere subjectis & debellare superbos.*

From which 'tis evident that he meant only this, that *Governing Nations*, and *Justice* shou'd be their chief Care, and greatest Art, not that  
he

he thought the *Romans* did not excell the *Grecians* in others too ; for, I believe, none will deny but *Cicero* was a greater Orator than *Demosthenes*, or at least as great, and that *Virgil* was as great a Poet, as *Homer*. And for other Arts, *Pliny* was of opinion, That the *Romans* excell'd the *Grecians* ev'n in 'em, as well as that of *Governing*, when he says in the 36th Book of his *Natural History*, That he wou'd shew the *World* conquer'd in the *Works of Art*, as well as by the *Sword*, and then proceeds to *Painting*, *Statuary*, &c.

But, Sir, I fear, I shall tire your patience shou'd I touch upon e'ery *Page* ; I'll therefore step to *P. 63*: and with that and the 65th. make an end of my *Reflections*, and then examine more particularly what relates to *Shakespear*. *P. 63*. he expresses himself much against Rhime in Plays, by which he not only shews his Mind is much alter'd since he writ *Edgar* in Rhime ; but also makes it the distinctive mark of *Heroic Verse* in English, as the numbers of *Hexameters* are of Latin Heroics : But he gives us no Reason for the Parallel, for that indeed wou'd be to break an old custom, which he's very fond of. If therefore I cou'd produce no Argument against him in particular, yet must, a bare denial, be granted equivalent to a bare Assertion : but the matter is not so barren of Reason, as to be destitute of a very convincing proof of the contrary, viz. The Numbers or Feet distinguish the Latin Verse, and the Numbers of *Hexameters* are very different from those of *Jambics*, which is the Verse most us'd,

at least out of the *Chorus*, in Tragedy, so in English 'tis the Feet, or Numbers that distinguish Heroic Verse from all others, whereas the Numbers are the same in blank Verse, as in Rhime; so that they are equally Heroic Verse, and *Milton's Paradise lost*, is a sufficient proof of this; so that according to Mr. *Rymon* all Verse of ten Syllables are as improper for Tragedies in English, as Pentameters are in Latin, for that is the consequence of his Arguments, *quidam vero loquuntur*

The second Paragraph of P. 65, That furnishes me with the subject of my last Reflection, is a Master-piece, compos'd of his beloved ingredients, the unaccountable, and the unintelligible; for he tells us, *that since the decay of the Roman Empire, this Island has been more fortunate in Matters of Poetry, than any of our Neighbours; &c.* I must tell him that it must be a good natur'd Reader (that after all he has said) shall take his word for it; for I can't see how he can make it out, if *Shakespeare* be so far from a Poet, as not to be fit to write Ballads, or what's all one; as ignorant of Nature as any Pug in *Barbary*; if *Ben Johnson* be guilty of such Stupidity; if *Milton*, as he commonly asserts, have nothing in him; and *Beaumont* and *Fletcher* are such, as he represents 'em. He would do well to fix this Excellence above our Neighbours somewhere; for hitherto he has done nothing but arraign our greatest Poets. But the latter end of this Paragraph as unintelligible as 'tis, must I find pass for a Proof of this; if we will have any from him. *We find* (says he) *the British Poetry to this day*.

To confirm which, he proceeds thus. One of our oldest Medals bears a harp on the Revers, with the Name *Kunobulino*, around it: But what of that good Sir? What if it had *Marlin, Gildas*, and half a score more about it, what's the consequence? I advise him in his next Book not to put his Friends to such trouble to understand him; for my part I could never yet meet with an *Oedipus* to solve the Riddle; for what has the oldest Medal to do with the proof of our having the *British* Poetry to this day, unless the other side of the Medal had furnish'd us with some of it, if he draw not the odd consequence from the Harp; that where there is Music, there must be Poetry; as where there is Smoke, there must be Fire, according to the laudable Observation of our Matrons of Antiquity.

But there needed no Medal of *Kunobuline* to be produc'd; for the proof of the early use of Poetry in this Island, and that long before *Virgil* writ. The *British Bards* are enough to justify that; we need not wait till the decay of the *Roman Empire*, witness *Lucan*, Lib. 3. who writ of times that preceded *Virgil*.

*Pot quibus qui fœtus animas, belloq; peremptas  
Laudibus in longam vates dimittitis ævum  
Plurima securi fuditis carmina Bards.*

But what's this to the Confirmation of his Assertion, that next the *Romans* we excell'd in Poetry? 'Tis not the number of Years, nor Poems that will establish our Excellence, but the Quality; 'tis their

Per-



Perfection, that must give us the advantage of our Neighbours.

But to expect Reason, Method (without which all is confusion), and Meaning from this Author is in vain, since he tells us in a former Essay he can keep to no *Method* or *Form*, and that he is not cut out for penning any Treatise. But then why, in the Name of dullness, does he fly in the Face of Nature, and Spirit of her appear in Print, not only as an Author, but Judge, bringing to his Tribunal, those who were qualified with what he extremely wants, viz. A Genius and Judgment: his Judgment being so weak, that he cou'd not keep Coherence through one only Page. Being thus qualify'd, no doubt his censure of the admirable *Shakespeare*, must be extraordinary, which I shall, after I have premis'd some general Considerations examine.

To survey the *Antients* with an impartial Eye 'twou'd make one wonder at those *extravagant Encomiums*, and that inexpressible Advantage above the *Moderns* some of our *Dogmatic Critics* give 'em, were there not an extraordinary *Vanity*, in extolling their Performances and Virtues, because by that means they arrogate to themselves the Deputation of understanding them better, than other Men. This makes *Rapin* tell us what an universal Genius *Homer* was; and that all the Arts and Sciences are to be learn'd from his Works, tho' some others perhaps, not less able to understand him, can not discover any such Matter, as the Author of the *Dialogues of the Dead*, very wittily

intimates in the Dialogue betwixt *Horner* and *As-  
top*. These Gentlemen would cover all the Absur-  
dities of this Poet, with the specious *Whims* of *Allegory*, never thought of by *Horner* himself. But he  
may thank his Fate for allotting him a time so  
much remote from ours, else they would not be  
fond of him to so unreasonable an excess since they  
can't allow no excuse for smaller Faults in their  
own Countrymen of a later date. Such ill Partis-  
ans are these Partial Critics; for I desire Mr. *Ry-  
mer* and all of his Opinion to parallel in *Shake-  
spere*, the Wounds, the Harrows, the Battles, and  
Sins of the Gods. And he must confess, if he  
be not a sworn Enemy to all Reason, that *Ho-  
mer's Juno* is a Character far beneath, and more  
disproportionable, than that of *Desdemona*, tho'  
the first be of the Queen of the Gods, *Joves* Si-  
ster and his Wife, and the other a Senators Daugh-  
ter of *Venice*, Young Innocent, and Tender. If  
*Desdemona* be too humble for Tragedy, and dis-  
cover not Elevation of Soul enough for her Birth  
and Fortune: *Horner's Juno* must be much too low  
for an Heroic Poem, having no Parallel for Scold-  
ing but at *Billingsgate*. For the furious curst Le-  
cious of a City Wife, who is supream Lady at  
home, are nothing to hers. This *Jupiter* finds, when  
the only Remedy he has left to stop her Mouth,  
is to threaten to thrash her *Divine Jacket*, which  
makes her Son *Vulcan* something concerned about  
the Shame 'twill be to have his Goddess Mother  
suffer the *Basinade* before the Heavenly Crew.  
Where is the Nature? Where the Reason of this?

If the Nobleness of his Thoughts, the Majesty of his Expression, and Variety of his Numbers made the succeeding Ages so fond of *Homer*, as to find some Excuse for his failures, in Conduct and Characters; is not *Shakespear* more ungenerously dealt with, whose Faults are made to a pretence to deny all his Beauties and Excellence?

But 'tis not these Instances in the Prince of the *Greek Poets*, (with many more, both as to the Conduct and Characters) that influence me to encline to a better Opinion of the Moderns (I mean of my own Country) than Mr. *Rymet*; and some of the Graver *Pedants* of the Age; the Excellence I find in *Shakespear* himself, commands a juster Veneration; for in his Thoughts and Expressions he discovers himself Master of a very just Observation of things; so that if he had (which I deny) no Learning, his natural parts wou'd sufficiently have furnish'd him with better Ethics, than our *Hypercritic* allows him. But that which aggravates his Malice is, he extends his censure to *Bent* himself, whose skill in *Moral Philosophy*, we suppose, at least equal to his: But to give the World some Satisfaction, that *Shakespear* has had as great a Veneration paid his Excellence by Men of unquestion'd parts, as this I now express for him, I shall give some Account of what I have heard from your Mouth, Sir, about the noble Triumph he gain'd over all the *Ancients*, by the Judgment of the ablest *Critics* of that time.

The Matter of Fact (if my Memory fail me not) was this, Mr. *Hales*, of *Eaton*, affirm'd that

he wou'd shew all the Poets of Antiquity, outdone by *Shakespear*, in all the Topics, and common places made use of in Poetry. The Enemies of *Shakespear* wou'd by no means yield him so much Excellence; so that it came to a Resolution of a trial of Skill upon that Subject; the place agreed on for the Dispute, was Mr. *Hales's* Chamber at *Eaton*; a great many Books were sent down by the Enemies of this Poet, and on the appointed day, my Lord *Falkland*, Sir *John Sackling*, and all the Persons of Quality that had Wit and Learning, and interested themselves in the Quarrel, met there, and upon a thorough Disquisition of the point, the Judges chose by agreement out of this Learned and Ingenious Assembly, unanimously gave the Preference to *Shakespear*. And the *Greek* and *Roman* Poets were adjudg'd to Vail at least their Glory in that to the English *Hero*. I cou'd wish, Sir, you wou'd give the Public a juster Account of this Affair, in Vindication of that Poet, I know you extremely esteem, and whom none but you excels.

Shall we therefore still admire *Shakespear* with these Learned and Ingenious Gentlemen, or put him in a Class below *Sternhold* or *Fleeknoe*, with Mr. *Rymer*, because he has not come close to the Rules *Aristotle* drew from the Practice of the *Greek* Poets, whom nothing it seems can please, but the Antic Forms and Methods of the *Athenian* Stage, or what comes up, and sticks close to them in our Language.



I can see no Reason why we shou'd be so very fond of imitating them here, without better proofs than the Critical Historiographer has produc'd. 'Tis certain, the *Greeks* had not the advantage of us in *Physicks*, or any other part of Philosophy, which with them chiefly consisted in words; they were a Talkative People; and being fond of the Opinion of Learning, more than the thing itself, as the most speedy way to gain that, stop'd their Enquiries on Terms, as is evident from their *Sophistry* and *Dialectic's*. There can be no dispute among the Learned, but that we excel them in these Points. Since the time of *Des Cartes*, when the Dictates of *Greece* began to be laid aside, what a Progress has been made in the discovery of Nature? and what Absurdities laid open in the School Precepts, and Terms of *Aristotle*.

But *Ethics* is a Study not so abstruse as the search of Natural Causes and Effects; a nice Observation of Mankind will furnish a sensible Man with them; which makes me unable to guess how the *Greeks* shou'd have so monstrous an advantage over us in this particular, as some wou'd give them, who are so far behind us in things of greater difficulty; but it can't be otherways whilst we make that Age and Nation the Standard of Excellence without regard to the difference of Custom, Age, Climate, &c. But I question not to make it appear hereafter, that we much surpass the *Greeks* and *Latins*, at least in *Dramatick Poetry*. As for *Expression* (the difference of Language consider'd) the Merits of which is proportion'd to the

Idea it presents to the Mind, and for *Thought*, as well as for *Design*. And had you, Sir, but given us an *Heroic Poem*, you had put the Controversie out of doubt as to the *Epic* too, as your *Oedipus* (for all the *Quantum mutatur*, of which another time) your *All for Love*, and some other of your Plays have in the *Dramatic*, in the esteem of impartial Judges.

Had our Critic entertain'd but common Justice for the *Heroes* of his *Own Country*, he wou'd have set *Shakespear's* Faults in their true Light, and distinguish'd betwixt his, and the Vices of the Age; for as *Rapin* (a much *juster* and more *Candid Critic*) observes, the Poet often falls into Vices by complying with the *Palate* of the Age he lives in; and to this may we truly and justly refer a great many of these Faults *Shakespear* is guilty of. But he not having that advantage the *Greek Poets* had, of a proper *Subsistence*, or to be provided for at the *Public Charge*, what Fruit he was to expect of his *Labor*, was from the Applause of the *Audience*; so that his chief aim was to please them, who not being so *Skilful in Criticisms*, as *Mr. Rymer*, wou'd not be pleas'd without some *Extravagancies* mingled in (tho' contrary to) the *Character*, such, and such a *Player* was to Act. This is the Reason that most of his *Tragedies* have a mixture of something *Comical*; the *Dalilah*, of the Age must be brought in, the *Clown*, and the *Vale* jesting with their *Batters*, if he resolv'd not to disoblige the *Auditors*. And I'm assur'd from very good hands, that the Person that Acted

*Jugo* was in much esteem for a Comcedian, which made *Shakespear* put several words, and expressions into his part (perhaps not so agreeable to his Character) to make the Audience laugh, who had not yet learnt to endure to be serious a whole Play. This was the occasion of that particular place so much houted at by our *Historiographer Royal*.

*Awake, what ho, Brabantio, &c.*

*An old black Ram is tugging your white Ewe, &c.*

This Vice of the Age it was that perverted many of his Characters in his other Plays: Nor could it be avoided if he wou'd have his Audience sit the Play out, and receive that Profit, that is the chief End of all Poets. To this same Cause may be attributed all those Quibbles, and playing upon words, so frequent in some part of him, as well as that Language that may seem too rough, and forc'd to the Ear, up, and down in some of the best of his Plays.

After all, the Head of his Accusation is, That 'tis not improbable, that *Shakespear* was ignorant of the Rules of *Aristotle's Poetics*; and was imperfect in the three Unities of Time, Place, and Action, which *Horace* in his *Art of Poetry* gives no Rules about; for that which I have heard quoted from him, has no relation to the *Dramatic Unities*;

*Deniq; sit, quod vis, simplex junctat & unum.*

as is evident from what goes before ; but to the Coherence, Uniformity, and Equality of any Poem in general.

*Amphora cepit*

*Institui, currente Rota cur urceus occit.*

'Tis only the Conclusion of what he proposes about Seven Verses before,

*Inceptis gravibus, & magna Professis, &c.*

and this of *Petronius* is a just Interpretation of it in my opinion,

*Præterea ne sententia emineant extra corpus orationis expresse sed infecto vestibus colore niteant.* That is, it gives only a Rule that all Poems be of a Piece and Equal.

So that since he cou'd gather no Instructions in this Point from *Horace*, we may excuse him for transgressing against them : and this defect his greatest Admirers confess'd before his Useless piece of ill-natur'd censure, and cou'd have Pardon'd Mr. *Rymer*, had he gone no farther ; But when he Robs him of all *Genius*, and denies him the Elevation of a *Shirly*, a *Fleckno*, or a *Jordan*, we must modestly return his Complement, and tell him, That never a *Blackamoor* (as he learnedly terms a *Negro*) in the Western Plantations, but must have a better tast of Poetry than himself ; and that 'tis evident from the Woman Judges, whole Judgment, he assures us, seldom errs, by their



their continual Approbation of *Orbello Hamlet, &c.* he is in the Wrong.

But shou'd we grant him that *Shakespeare* wanted Art (tho' *Bis Johnson* denies it) can he from thence infer he was no Poet? The dispute of which confers most to the forming a Poet, (I mean, a Compleat one) Art, or Nature, was never yet agreed on; *Horace* joyns them, *Quintilian* and some others give it to Nature: But, till this Gentleman, never did any Man yield it wholly to Art; for that all his Arguments both in this or his former Book seem to drive at.

A nice Observation of Rules, is a Confinement a great Genius cannot bear, which naturally covers Liberty; and tho' the *French* whose Genius, as well as Language, is not strong enough to rise to the Majesty of Poetry, are easier reduc'd within the Discipline of Rules, and have perhaps of late Years, more exactly observ'd 'em. yet I never yet met with any Englishman, who wou'd prefer their Poetry to ours. All that is great of Humane things, makes a nearer approach to the Eternal Perfection of Greatness, and extends as much as possible its limits toward being Boundless: 'Tis not govern'd by Common Rules and Methods, but Glories in a Noble Irregularity; and this not only in Writings, but Actions of some Men. *Alexander, Caesar, Alcibiades, &c.* seem'd actuated by other Principles than the common Maxims that govern the Rest of Humane Kind; and in them the greatest Virtues have been mixt with great Vices, as well as the Writings of *Shakespeare*;

*ſpear* : yet are they granted *Hartes*, and ſo muſt  
He be confeſſ'd a Poet : The *Heroes* Race are all  
like *Achilles*. *ſuaſa regant, ſibi nata non ſub*

But as I do not think that to be a *Great Man*,  
one muſt neceſſarily be wholly exempt from  
Rules, ſo I muſt grant, That *Kings*, *Hephocles*, and  
*Yon Self* are very *Great*, tho' generally very *Regu*  
*lar* ; But theſe are *Rarities* ſo uncommon, that  
Nature has produc'd very few of them, and like  
the *Phoenixes* of *Honeſty*, that live up to the *Pre*  
*cepts* of *Morality*, ought to have public *Statues*  
erected to them. But yet the leſs perfect ought  
not to be Rob'd of their *Merits*, becauſe they  
have defects, eſpecially when the Number of  
thoſe exceed thoſe, as in *Shakeſpear*, all whole  
*Faults* have not been able to frustrate his obtain  
ing the end of All juſt Poems, *Pleasure* and *Proſper*  
To deny this, wou'd be to fly in the Face of the  
known experience of ſo many *Years*. He has  
(I ſay) in moſt, if not all, of his *Plays* attain'd  
the full end of Poetry, *Delight* and *Proſper*, by mo  
ving *Terror* and *Pity* for the *Changes* of *Fortune*,  
which *Humane Life* is ſubject to, by giving us a  
lively and juſt Image of them (the beſt Definition  
of a *Play*) for the Motion of theſe *Paſſions* afford  
us *Pleasure*, and their *Purgation*. *Proſper*. Beſides  
there are few or none of thoſe many he has writ,  
but have their Juſt *Moral*, not only of more gene  
ral *Uſe* and *Advantage*, but alſo more naturally  
the Effect of them, than that of the *Oedipus* of *Sophocles*,  
as may be ſoon perceiv'd by any one that  
will give himſelf the trouble of a little *Thought*  
and

and which will in some measure appear from what I have to say in the particular Defence I shall now make of

**Othello.**

To begin with the Fable (as our Critic has done) I must tell him, he has as falsely as ridiculously represented it, which I shall endeavour to pursue a Juster light.

**Othello, a Noble Moor, a Negro,** that had by long Services, and brave Acts established himself in the Opinion of the Senate of Venice, with the affections of Desdemona, Daughter to Brabantio one of the Senators, by the moving account he gives of the imminent Danger he had pass'd and hazards he had ventur'd through, a belief of which his known Valour confirm'd, and unknown to his Father Marries her, and carries her (with the Verbe of the Senate) with him to Cyprus, his Province. He makes Cassio his Lieutenant, tho' Jago, had solicited it by his Friends for himself, which Refusal joyn'd with a jealousy, that Othello had had in it with his Wife, makes him contrive the destruction of Cassio, and the Moor, to gratify his Revenge, and Ambition. But having no way to revenge himself sufficiently on the Moor, from whom he suppos'd he had receiv'd a double Wrong, proportionable to the injury, but this, he draws him into a great deal of Copping into a jealousy of his Wife, and that by a chain of Circumstances contriv'd to that purpose, and urg'd with all the taking insinuations

*information, imaginables particularly by a Italian  
 chief, he had contriv'd for Cassio (which Jago's Wife  
 stole from Desdemona) to convince the Moorish  
 Wife was too familiar with him, having parted with  
 such a favour to him, which she had on her Marriage  
 receiv'd from Othello, with the strictest charge of  
 preserving it, being a Gift of his Mother of Curious  
 Work, and secret Value. As Othello, by these means,  
 won to a belief of his that Iago's wife had receiv'd  
 order of those, he concluded guilty, viz. Cassio, and his  
 Wife; Jago officiously undertakes, the dispatching of  
 Cassio, having receiv'd his Commission already, but is dis-  
 appointed of his design, employing one Roderigo to  
 that purpose, who had follow'd him from Venice, in  
 hopes by his means to enjoy Desdemona; as Jago had  
 promis'd him. But the Moor effectually puts his  
 Revenge in Execution on his Wife, which is no sooner  
 done, but he's convinc'd of his Error, and in remorse  
 kills himself, whilst Jago, the Cause of all this Villany,  
 having stain'd his Wife for discovering it, is born  
 away to a more ignominious Punishment, as more pro-  
 portion'd to his Villanies.*

*The Fable to be perfect must be Admirable and  
 Probable, and as it approaches those two, is more  
 or less perfect in its kind. Admirable, is what is  
 uncommon, and extraordinary. Probable, is what  
 is agreeable to common Opinion. This must be  
 the Test of this Fable of Othello; but then we must  
 not take it, as given us by our Drolling Critic,  
 who very cruelly confesseth in his former Book,  
 (and in that he is no Changeling) he must be  
 merry*



merry out of Season, as he always is; but as I have laid it down, else we shou'd do *Shakespeare* a great deal of Injustice.

I suppose none will deny that it is *Admirable*: that is, compos'd of Incidents that happen not e'ery day, his Antagonist confesses as much; there is therefore nothing but the *Probability* of it attack'd by him, which I question not either wholly to prove, or at least to set it on the same bottom with the best of *Sophocles*, that of his *Oedipus*.

First, to see whether he have sinn'd against Probability, let us consider what our Caviller objects, all which may be reduc'd to two Points. First, That 'tis not probable, that the Senate of *Venice* (tho' it usually employ Strangers) should employ a *Moor* against the *Turk*: neither is it in the next place probable, that *Desdemona* shou'd be in Love with him. On this turns all the Accusation, this is the very Head of his offending.

All the Reason he gives, or rather implies, for the first Improbability is, That 'tis not likely the State of *Venice*, wou'd employ a *Moor*, (taking him for a *Mahometan*) against the *Turk*, because of the mutual Bond of Religion. He, indeed says not so, but takes it for granted that *Othello* must be rather for the *Turkish* interest than the *Venetian*, because a *Moor*. But, I think (nor does he oppose it with any reason) the Character of the *Venetian* State being to employ Strangers in their Wars, it gives sufficient ground to

our

Our Poet, to suppose a Moor employ'd by em  
as well as a Christian; that is a Christian Moor, as  
Orbello is represented by our Poet; for from such  
a Moor, there could be no just fear of treachery  
in favour of the *Mahometans*. He tells us —

*Fetch my Life and Being from Men of Royal Stare.*

Supposing him therefore the Son or Nephew of  
the Emperor of *Momotopa*, *Ethiopia* or *Congo*,  
forc'd to leave his Country for Religion, or any  
other occasion, coming to Europe by the conve-  
nience of the Portuguese Ships, might after sever-  
al Fortunes, serve first as a Volontier till he had  
signaliz'd himself, and prov'd himself worthy of  
Command, part of this may very reasonably be  
drawn from what the Poet makes him say. Now  
upon this Supposition, it appears more rational,  
and probable, the *Venetians* shou'd employ a Stran-  
ger, who wholly depended on themselves, and  
whose Country was too remote, to influence him  
to their prejudice, than other Strangers, whose  
Princes may in some measure direct their Actions  
for their own Advantage. But that Orbello is sup-  
pos'd to be a Christian is evident from the Second  
Act, and from those words of *Jago*, — *And then*  
*for her to Win the Moor, wou'd to renounce his Bap-*  
*tism, &c.* Why therefore an African Christian  
may not by the *Venetians* be suppos'd to be as ze-  
alous against the *Turks*, as an European Christian, I  
cannot imagine. So that this Bustle of *Littera*  
*littoribus Contraria*, &c. is only an inconsiderate  
amusement

Amusement, to shew how little the Gentleman was troubled with thought when he wrote it.

No more to the purpose, is that Heat he expresses against *Shakspears* giving a Name to his *Moor*, though *Cinthio* did not, though History did not warrant it. For this can be no more objected to our Poet, then the perverting the Character of *Dido*, and confounding the Chronology to bring her to the time of *Aeneas*, is to *Virgil*; the first as 'tis not mention'd in History, so it does not contradict it; but the last is a plain opposition to express History, and Chronology. If *Virgil* be allow'd his Reason for doing that, *Shakspear* is not to seek for one for what he has done. 'Twas necessary to give his *Moor* a place of some Figure in the World, to give him the greater Authority, and to make his Actions the more Considerable, and what place more likely to fix on, than *Venice*, where Strangers are admitted to the highest Commands in Military Affairs.

'Tis granted, a *Negro* here does seldom rise above a Trumpeter, nor often perhaps higher at *Venice*. But then that proceeds from the Vice of Mankind, which is the Poets Duty as he informs us, to correct, and to represent things as they should be, not as they are. Now 'tis certain, there is no reason in the nature of things, why a *Negro* of equal Birth and Merit, should not be on an equal bottom, with a *German*, *Hollander*, *French-man*, &c. The Poet, therefore ought to do justice to Nations, as well as Persons, and

set them to rights, which the common course of things confounds. The same reason stands in force for this, as for punishing the Wicked, and making the Virtuous fortunate, which as *Rapin*, and all the Critics agree, the Poet, ought to do, though it generally happens otherways. The Poet hath therefore well chosen a polite People, to cast off this customary Barbarity, of confining Nations, without regard to their Virtue, and Merits, to slavery, and contempt for the meer Accident of their Complexion.

I hope I have brought by this time as convincing proofs for the probability in this particular, as Mr. *Rymer* has against it, if I have not wholly gain'd my Point. Now therefore I shall proceed to the probability of *Desdemona's* Love for the *Moor*, which I think is something more evident against him.

Whatever he aims at in his inconsistent Ramble against this, may be reduc'd to the *Person* and the *Manner*. Against the *Person* he quotes you two Verses out of *Horace*, that have no more reference to this, than——in the Beginning *God made the Heaven and the Earth*, has to the proof of the *Jus Divinum* of lay Bishops, the Verses are these,

*Sed non ut placidis coeant immitia, non ut  
Serpentes avibus gementur, tigribus agni.*

unless he can prove that the Colour of a Man alters his Species, and turns him into a *Beast* or *Devil*. 'Tis such a vulgar Error, so criminal a fond-



fondness of our Selves, to allow nothing of Humanity to any but our own Acquaintance of the fairer hew ; that I wonder a Man, that pretends to be at all remov'd from the very Dreggs of the thoughtless Mob, should espouse it in so public a manner a Critic too, who puts the Poet : in mind of correcting the common corruptions of Custom. Any Man that has convers'd with the best Travels, or read any thing of the History of those parts, on the continent of *Africa*, discover'd by the *Portugueze*, must be so far from robbing the *Negroes* of some Countrys there of *Humanity*, that they must grant them not only greater Heroes, nicer observers of Honour, and and all the Moral Virtues that distinguish'd the old *Romans*, but also much better Christians (where Christianity is profess'd) than we of *Europe* generally are. They move by a nobler Principle, more open, free and generous, and not such slaves to sordid Interest.

After all this, *Othello* being of *Royal Blood*, and a Christian, where is the disparity of the Match ? If either side is advanc'd, 'tis *Desdemona*. And why must this Prince though a Christian, and of known and experienc'd *Virtue*, *Courage*, and *Conduct*, be made such a Monster, that the *Venetian* Lady can't love him without perverting Nature ? Experience tells us, that there's nothing more common than Matches of this kind, where the Whites, and Blacks cohabit, as in both the *Indies* : and Even here at home, Ladys that have not wanted white Adorers have indulg'd their A-

morous Dalliances, with their Sable Lovers, without any of *Othello's* Qualifications, which is proof enough, that Nature and Custom, have not put any such unpassable bar betwixt Creatures of the same kind, because of different colours, which I hope will remove the improbability of the Person, especially when the powerful Auxiliaries of extraordinary Merit and Vertues come to plead with a generous Mind.

The probability of the *Person* being thus confirmed, I shall now consider that of the *Manner* of his obtaining her *Love*. To this end we must still keep in mind the known and experienc'd Virtue of the *Moor* which gave Credit, and Authority to what he said; and then we may easily suppose the story of his Fortunes, and Dangers, would make an impression of Pity, and admiration at least on the bosom of a Woman, of a noble and generous Nature. No *Man* of any generous Principle, but must be touch'd at suffering Virtue, and value the noble sufferer, whose Courage and Bravery, bears him through uncommon Trials and extraordinary Dangers. Nor would it have less force on a Woman of any principle of Honour and tenderness; she must be mov'd and pleas'd with the Narration, she must admire his constant Virtue, and Admiration is the first step to Love, which will easily gain upon those who have once entertain'd it.

*Dido* in *Virgil* was won by the *Trojan* stranger she never saw before, by the relation of his fortunes and Escapes; and some particulars of the  
Nar-

Narration of *Aeneas*, carrys full as ridiculous and absurd a Face as any thing, *Othello* says; the most trifling of which is,

*And of the Cannibals that each other eat  
the Anthropophagi, and Men whose Heads  
do grow beneath their Shoulders.*

for all the rest is admirably fine, though our wonderful Critic can't relish it, there is a moving Beauty in each Line, the words are well chosen, and the Image they give great, and Poetical; what an Image does *Desarts Idle* give? that very Epithet is a perfect *Hypotyposis*, and seems to place me in the midst of one, where all the active hurry of the World is lost; but all that I can say, will not reach the excellency of that Epithet so many properties of such a place meet in it. But as for the *Cannibals*, &c. and the *Men whose Heads grow beneath their Shoulders*. I have heard it condemn'd by Men whose taste I generally approve, yet must they give me leave to dissent from them here; and permit me either wholly to justify *Shakespeare*, even here, or at least to put him on an equal bottom with *Virgil*, in his most beautiful part. For the fault lyes either in the *Improbability* of those things, or their *Impertinence* to the business in Hand. First Probability we know is built on common Opinion; but 'tis certain the *Cannibals* have been generally believed, and that with very good grounds of Truth; so that there can be no doubt of the probability of that.

Next for the *Men whose Heads grow beneath their Shoulders*, though that is not establish'd on so good a Foundation as Truth; yet the general Traditionary belief of it in those days, is sufficient to give it a poetical probability. As this was not *Improbable*, so neither was it *Impertinent*, for 'tis certain, that whatever contributed to the raising her Idea of his Dangers and Escapes, must conduce to his aim, but to fall into the Hands of those, whom not only the fury of War, but that of Custom makes Cruel, heightens the danger, and by consequence the Concern, especially in a young Lady possess'd with the legend of the Nursery, whence she must have amazing Ideas of the Danger of the brave *Moer* from them.

But at worst, *Shakespear* is on as good a bottom as *Virgil*, in this particular; the Narrative of *Aeneas*, that won the Heart of *Dido*, has many things full as trifling and absurd as this, if not far more? For is there not as much likelihood that there shou'd be a People that have their Heads grow beneath their Shoulders, as the Race of the *Cyclops*, that have but one Eye, just beneath their Forheads, and that *Polyphemus* his Eye was as big as a *Grecian* Shield, or the Sun; or that he cou'd wade through the Sea, without being up to his middle. Can there be invented any thing so unnatural, as the *Harpys* in the third Book, who had the Faces of Virgins, Wings, Feathers, &c. Of Birds, and a human Voice, as is evident from the *infelix vates*, that forsook them they shou'd not build their destin'd City,



City, till they had eaten their Tables, or Trenchers, (which by the way was a trivial and ridiculous sort of a pun, as the event shew'd, when *Iulus* found out the Jest,) nor is *Scylla* a more natural mixture. But let's hear the description of all three, from *Virgil* himself, least I be thought to injure his Memory, first of the Harpys in the *Strophades*.

*Virginis volucrum vultus, fœdissima ventris,  
Proluvies, unæq; Manus, & pallida semper  
Ora fame.*——

The beginning of *Horace's* Art of Poetry, *Humano Capiti, &c.* seems a Copy of this; nor is *Scylla* a more Homogeneous Composition.——

*At Scyllam cæcis cobibet spelunca latebris  
Ora exsertantem, & naves in saxa trahentem:  
Prima hominis facies, & pulchro pectore virgo  
Pube tenus, postrema immani Corpore præfixa  
Delphinum Caudas utero commissâ luporum.*

Then for the Cyclop *Polyphemus*, the Grecian he takes aboard, tells him his Eye is

*Argolici clypei, aut Phæbeæ lampadis Instar.*

and a little after lest this shou'd be taken as an hyperbolical magnifying it by the terror of the fearful Greek; in his own Person, he says of him

—— *Graditurq; per aquor.*  
*Fam medium, necdum fluctus latera ardua tinxit.*

The Absurdities in *Homer* are much more numerous than those in *Virgil*. (I mean those that must pass for such, if this in *Shakespear* is so,) But because they relate not to this particular, I shall say nothing of them here. All these I have remark'd in the Narration of *Aeneas*, hinder'd not, but that it won the Heart of *Dido*, though firmly bent against a second Amour,

*Ille meos primus, qui me sibi junxit amores*  
*Abstulit: ille habeat secum, servetq; sepulchro.*

especially one that was not like to be so very Honorable. *Desdemona* had no such rye, to steel her Heart against *Othello's* Tongue, no reason to curb that Passion she ne'er felt before, when the prevailing Virtue of the *Mour*, attack'd her Heart; well may we therefore believe *Desdemona* shou'd yield to the same force, that conquer'd *Dido*, with all her Resolutions and Engagements, to the memory of *Sichceus*. Hear how she cries out to her Sister *Ann*,

*Quis novus hic nostris successit sedibus hospes*  
*Quem sese ore ferens? Quam forti pectore &*  
*Armis?*

*Credo equidem, nec vana fides, genus esse deorum.*  
*Degeneres animos timor arguit, haec quibus ille*  
*Tactatur fatis, quæ bella exhausta canebat.*

and

and at the beginning of this fourth Book,

— *Haerent infixi pectore Vultus*

Verbagz—

and the latter end of the first Book confirms this

*Multa super Priamo Rogitans super Hectore multa.*

cou'd *Aeneas* his Story not, one jot more moving or probable make a meer stranger pass for a God, with the Carthaginian Queen at first hearing; and must it be incredible, that the same shall not make *Othello* pass for so much as a Man? The Parallel is so exact, that I am apt to think, *Shakespear* took the Copy from *Virgil*. Nor can it justly be urg'd, that these things were believ'd by the *Romans*, since they were so far from believing these trifles, that *Seneca* in his Epistles, laughs at those Fables, that constituted their Hell, which was of much greater consequence. But supposing they were believ'd, the same will hold good for *Shakespear*, in this particular, I vindicate him in: for 'tis built on as vulgar and general a tradition, as these Fables of old were, so that the advantage is equal betwixt these two great Poets in this particular.

By this time, I hope our *Dressing Caviller*, will grant it no such monstrous absurdity for the *Doge* to say,

*I think this Tale wou'd win my Daughter too.*

since without doubt, that short summing up of what was only the subject of his tale to *Desdemona*, with only the supposition of the particulars, must move any generous Breast.

But should all I have said fail of clearing the *Probability* of the *Fable* from Mr. Rymer's Objections, yet ought not that to rob *Shakespear* of his due Character of being a *Poet*, and a great *Genius*: unless he will for the same reason deny those prerogatives to *Homer*, and *Sophocles*. The former has often lost the *Probable*, in the *Admirable*, as any Book of the *Iliads* and *Odyssees* will prove; and the latter, as *Rapin* justly observes, has not kept to probability, ev'n in his best performance, I mean in his *Oedipus Tyrannus*; for (as *Rapin* has it) *Oedipus* ought not to have been ignorant of the assassinate of *Laius*, the ignorance he's in of the Murder, which makes all the Beauty of the intrigue, is not probable; and if a Man wou'd play the Droll with this *Fable* of *Oedipus*, it would furnish full as ridiculous a Comment, as witty Mr. Rymer has done from this of *Othello*; and sure I can't err in imitating so great a Critic.

First, then let all Men before they defend themselves on the Highway, think well of what they do, lest not being Mathematically sure he's at home, he kill his own Father, which perhaps is something dangerous in this Age, where such boon Blades frequent the Road, and such good-natur'd Ladies have the disposing of our fate. Next



Next, let e'ry Younger Brother, that ventures to ride in another Man's Boots, be very circumspect, lest he marries his own Mother.

Thirdly and Lastly, This may be a caution to the few Fools that doat on Virtue, that they trust to a rotten Reed that will be of little use to 'em, since all is whirl'd about by an unavoidable necessity.

These are much more the consequence of this *Fable of Oedipus*, than those wond'rous Truths, he draws from that of *Othello*. Nay, the moral *Sophocles* concludes his *Oedipus* with, will serve as justly for *Othello*, viz. *That no Man can be call'd happy before his Death*. But the whole *Fable of Oedipus*, tho' so much admir'd, is so very singular and improbable, that 'tis scarce possible, it ever cou'd have happen'd; on the other hand, the fatal Jealousie of *Othello*, and the Revenge of *Jago*, are the natural Consequences of our ungovern'd Passions, which by a prospect of such Tragical effects of their being indulg'd, may be the better regulated and govern'd by us. So that tho' *Othello* ends not so formally with a moral Sentence, as *Oedipus* does, yet it sets out one of much greater Value. If it be a fault in *Shakespear*, that it end not with such a sentence, *Sophocles* is guilty of no less in his *Philoctetes*, which not only concludes without any Moral, but is also incapable of being reduc'd to any, at least of any moment. Whereas the Morals of *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, and most of *Shakespear's* Plays, prove a lesson of mightier consequence than any in *Sophocles*, except the *Electra*, viz. that Usurpation, tho' it thrive a while, will at last be punish'd, &c. Besides the worst, and most irre-

irregular of *Shakespear's* Plays, contains two or three such Fables, as that of *Philoctetes*, which answers not one of the ends of Poetry; for it neither pleases or profits, it moves neither Terror nor Compassion, containing only a dry account, without any variety of the persuasions of *Pyrrhus*, to get *Philoctetes* to go with him to *Troy* with the Arrows of *Hercules*; who, after he had by Treachery gain'd 'em, as foolishly restores 'em to him again, and *Troy* might have stood long enough, if *Hercules* had not come from the Gods, to bend the stubborn Fool, that rather chose to be miserable himself; with his endless *na na, na na, na na's* and his Complaints of his Foot, something like the *Tumors, Chilblains, Carnosities, &c.* rak'd together by *Mr. Rymer*. And all that can be learnt from this Play of *Sophocles* is,

First, That we never send Boys of our Errand, unless we have a God at command to make up the business he has spoil'd; if we mean our business shall be thoroughly done, and not the fate of a Nation sacrific'd to a pain in the Foot.

Secondly, Not to trust Strangers we never saw before, for a fair Tale, with our Safety and Treasure, without a Mathematical Demonstration of their Fidelity and Trust.

Lastly, That all Men with sore Feet shoud not despair of a Cure.

But I have dwelt so long on the Fable, that I have not time enough to discuss the other parts, as the Characters, Thoughts, and Expressions, so fully as I ought; especially, the Thought and Expression,

son, for 'twould require a Volumn near as big as *Shakespeare*, to set them off according to their worth; with all the proofs from Grammar or Rhetoric of their Truth and Justness. The Fable is look'd upon by *Rapin*, and after him by our *Gleaner of Criticisms*, as the Soul of the Play, and therefore I may be excus'd for my prolixity in its defence, and allow'd a little more time for a full Justification of the other parts of *Shakespeare*, attack'd with less Reason and Justice: Mr. *Rymer* has taken above ten Year to digest his Accusations, and therefore it can't in reason be thought I shou'd not in half so many days be able to perform all the work he has cut out: Nor can I proceed to a particular consideration of all the Characters of this Play at this time. *Desdemona* I think is the most faulty; but since our *Antagonist* will have *Fago*, the most intollerable, I shall confine my self to that.

What I have said in the beginning of my Vindication of *Shakespeare*, must here be recollected on *Fago's* behalf; besides which, I have some other considerations to offer, which I hope will lighten the insupportable load of Contempt, and Ridicule cast on him by our Caviller.

First, Therefore in our Judgment of *Fago*, we must follow the Rule of *Horace*, so much stood upon by Mr. *Rymer*.

*Intererit multum*

*Cholcus an Assyrius, Thebis nutritus, an Argis.*

We

We are not only to respect the profession of the Man in our Judgment of the Character, but we must also have an Eye to his Nation, the Country he was born in, and the prevailing temper of the People, with their National Vices; by this Rule we shall find *Jago*, an *Italian*; by Nature *Selfish*, *Jealous*, *Reserv'd*, *Revengeful* and *Proud*, nor can I see any reason to suppose his Military Profession shou'd to powerfully influence him to purge away all these Qualities, and establish contrary in their room. Nor can I believe the quotation from *Horace*, which our Caviiler produces, can justly be extended to all degrees of Soldiers.

It runs thus in *Horace*.

— *Honoratum si forte reponis Achillem*  
*Impiger, Fracundus, Inexorabilis, Acer,*  
*Jura neget sibi Nata, nihil non arroget armis.*

'Tis plain from what goes before, and what follows after that *Horace* meant not this, at least for a general Character of all Soldiers, but only as a direction for the drawing *Achilles*, or such a Hero; for he's enumerating the *Manners*, of those public Characters, that were generally made use of by the *Romans* in their Tragedies, for this follows.

*Sit Medea ferox invictaq; Flebilis Ino,*  
*Perfidus Ixion, Io vaga, tristis Orestes.*

And a few Lines before he is giving the Characters of several Professions and Ages, from whence he proceeds



proceeds to these particular Characters of *Achilles*, *Jno*, *Medea*, &c. drawn from the known Stories of them, and this is confirm'd by what he joyns to this;

*Siquid inexpertum scenæ committit*, &c.

That is, if you take known Persons, that have for so many Ages trod the Stage, this must be their Character; but if you bring some new person on it, that was never there before, then take care that your Persons preserve that Character you give 'em at first, &c.

I know *Rapin* gives a Soldier these qualities; *Fierce*, *Insolent*, *Sarley*, *Inconstant*, which partly are the effects of their manner of Life, but I can't conceive these to be opposite to those other in *Jago*. The Characters or Manners, as the same *Rapin* observes, are to be drawn from Experience; and that tells us, that they differ in Soldiers according to their Nature and Discipline; that also tells us that the Camp is not free from Designs, Supplantings, and all the effects of the most criminal of Passions, and this indeed is evident from the Draught *Homer* gives us of the Grecian Camp, where *Love* was not judg'd so contrary to the Character of a General, as Mr. *Rymer* wou'd have it thought: *Achilles* and *Agamemnon* having both their admir'd Captives. And let Mr. *Rymer* say what he please, I can prove that 'twas the Love of *Brieseis*, that troubl'd *Achilles*, and confirm'd his anger, as well as the meer affront of having his prize taken

ken from him, but of that in another place. In short, the *Thersites* of *Homer* differs as much from the Soldiers of *Mr. Rymer's* acquaintance, as *Jago* does; nor is he the only Soldier that could dissemble. *Simon* in *Virgil*, and *Neoptolemus* in *Sophocles*, are as guilty of it as he.

But granting that *Jago's* Character is defective something in the Manners, *Homer* and *Sophocles* have been guilty (the first much more, the other not much less) of the same: what are the Wounds, Scuffles, Passions, Adulteries, &c. Of the Gods and Goddesses, obvious to the meanest Capacity; and beyond all dispute? Is not the Character of *Oedipus Colonus* of *Sophocles*, as *Rapin* remarks, extremely unproportionable to *Oedipus Tyrannus*? And tho' *Mr. Rymer* is so severe, to deny that the Character of *Jago* is that of a Soldier, because so different from his Military Acquaintance; yet I'm confident he wou'd take it extremely amiss, if I shou'd deny him to be a Critic, because so contrary to all the Critics that I have met with, playing the merry Droll, instead of giving serious and solid Reasons for what he advances.

The other Characters of this Play I must defer till another time, as well as a thorough defence of his Thoughts and Expression, both which he wholly denies him; and with an extravagantly wonderful Assurance publicly tells us; that the Neighing of a Horse has more *Humanity*, (for that is his Witicism) than the Tragical Flights of *Shakespeare*.

Mr.

Mr. Rymer's Friend *Rapin* tells us, that the Thoughts are the expression of the Manners, as Words are of Thoughts, that is the natural result of the Manners, which being already clear'd from his Accusations, the vindication of the Thoughts are included in them, as well as their Condemnation in his Charge against the other, for he disdains to be particular in his proof. Then for the Expressions of *Shakespear*, none but Mr. Rymer can find fault with 'em. The excellence of expression consists in this, that it bear a proportion to the Things; that is, that it give us a full Idea of 'em; that it be apt, clear, natural, splendid, and numerous. There is scarce a serious part of *Shakespear*, but has all these qualities in the Expression.

To omit several Scenes in *Hamlet*, particularly that betwixt him, and his Fathers Ghost: I'll only instance in two or three Speeches, that are, and have been on the Stage in our Memory, which may give some sample of the Poetry, Thought, and Expression of *Shakespear*. The first is in the *Midsummer Nights Dreams*, now acted under the name of the *Fairy Queen*. Act the Third, *Titania* speaks thus,

*Titan* : Be kind and courteous to this Gentleman.

*Hop in his Walks, and Gambol in his Eyes,  
Feed him with Apricocks and Dewberrys,  
With purple Grapes, green Figs and Mulberrys,  
The Honey Baggs steal from the Humble Bees;  
And for Night Tapers crop their waxen Thighs,*

And light them at the fiery Glow-worms Eyes;  
 To have my Love to Bed and to Arise.  
 And pluck the Wings from painted Butter-flies,  
 To fan the Moon Beams from his sleeping Eyes.  
 Nod to him Elves, and do him Courtesies.

is not this extremely poetical and fine? The next  
 I shall take from the 2d. Scene of *Richard the*  
*Second.*

*York.* Then as I said the Duke (great *Bullingbrook*)  
 Mounted upon a hot and fiery Steed,  
 Which his aspiring Rider seem'd to know,  
 With slow but stately Grace kept on his course.  
 While all Tongues cry'd God save the *Bullingbrook*.  
 You wou'd have thought the very Windows spoke,  
 So many greedy looks of Young and old,  
 Through Casements darted their desiring Eyes  
 Upon his Visage, and that all the Walls  
 With painted Imag'ry had said at once,  
 Jesu preserve thee, welcome *Bullingbrook*.  
 Whilst He, from one side to the other turning,  
 Bare headed lower, than his proud Steeds Neck  
 Bespeak them thus; I thank ye Countrymen.  
 And thus still doing thus he pass'd along,  
 Dutches. Alas! Poor *Richard* where rides he the  
 while?

*York.* As in a Theatre the Eyes of Men,  
 After a well grac'd Actor leaves the Stage  
 Are idly bent on him that enters next  
 Thinking his prattle to be tedious



*Even so, or with much more contempt Mens Eyes,  
Did scowl on Richard : No Man cry'd God save  
him.*

*No joyful Tongue gave him Him his welcome home.  
But Dust was thrown upon his Sacred Head  
Which with such gentle sorrow he shook off  
His Face still combating with Tears and Smiles,  
(The Badges of Grief and Patience)  
That had not God (for some strong purpose) steel'd  
The Hearts of Men, they must perforce have melted,  
And Barbarism it self have pittied him.*

Are not here all the Beautys of Thought joyn'd with all those of expression ? is it possible any thing that has but the least Humanity, shou'd be dull enough not to relish, not to be mov'd, nay transported with this ? I must confess, it has fir'd me, so that I think our Critic better deserves the Arraignment *Tiberius* gave the Poet, for ill representing *Agamemnon*, whose Character at best, was but a Child of Fancy, and therefore subject to the Poets Will ; but to Blaspheme such a visible Excellence, Merits the highest contempt, if not a greater Punishment.

*Shakespears* Numbers carry such an Harmonious Majesty, that what *Rapin* and some other Critics say of *Homer*, is justly his due ; they give a noble Beauty to the meanest things. 'Tis true, the Words he sometimes uses, by their absoleteness renders some of his Expressions a little dark, but then we must remember the great alteration our Language has undergone since his time ; but ex-

amine well the sense of his Words, you'l seldom find him guilty of Bombast, (tho' laid to his charge by Mr. Rymer,) that is Words and Thoughts ill match'd. On the contrary, they are generally so well sorted, that they present us with so lively and sensible Image of what they import, that it fixes it self in our Minds, with an extream satisfaction; and the more we view it, the more it gains upon us.

I shall hereafter step into the Scenes with Mr. Rymer, and also examine his Narrations, Deliberations, Didactic and Pathetic Discourses, which are all that are made use of Tragedy, in which if he sometimes err, he has yet perform'd well; and amidst his faults you shall find some thoughts of a great Genius. I shall only now observe *en passant*, in defence of that Scene, betwixt *Fago* and *Othello*, that we ought not to be imposed on by positive assertions, or think because Mr. Rymer tells us so, that half words, and ambiguous Reflexions, do not naturally work up Jealousie, or that 'tis not natural, for *Othello* to catch at e'ry blown surmise. These Assertions of our Critic shew him to be very ignorant of the very nature of this Passion, for as 'tis reduc'd to the primitive Desire by the Moralists, so 'tis thus by them defin'd,

*Jealousie is a fear of losing a good we very much value and esteem, arising from the least causes of Suspicion.*

now

now 'tis evident even from the trifling, and false Objections of his enemies that *Shakespear* had this very notion of this passion. For this reason 'tis, he makes *Othello* swallow the very first bait laid by *Jago* for him. *Cassio* is found with *Desdemona*, and on *Othello's* approach, consciously retires, which tho' he did to avoid his Anger not Jealousie; yet *Jago* improves the opportunity to his purpose, with an—*I like not that*; then to awake the *Moors* Jealousie by degrees, he takes occasion from *Cassio's* departure to question him—*did Cassio when you woo'd my Lady know of your Love?* Which he pursues with *half-words*, and ambiguous *Reflexions*, that plainly imply more than they barely express, in which he discover'd, fear to speak on't what he desir'd *Othello* shou'd know, the natural consequence of which is the touching a jealous Nature, with curiosity in a thing, that so nearly related to his Happiness. E'ry word rous'd some surmize; and as *Ovid* observes, *cuncta timemus Amantes*, Lovers fear any Appearance. But more of this hereafter. In the in the mean while I'm pretty confident, e'ry Mans own Sence will supply my defect of a particular defence of the working up of *Othello's* passion of Jealousie.

And now Sir, 'tis time to turn my Thoughts from a defence of *Shakespear*, to an excuse of my own Transgression, in addressing this Essay to you without asking your Leave. I'm not for asking pardon for an Offence, before I have committed it, and then I am willing if possible,

to extenuate it from all its heightning Circumstances; and Sir, I hope I have enough to say for my Self in committing this.

First, I knew your Nature so well, that tho' no Name, cou'd have given more Authority to my defence of *Shakespear*; yet wou'd you never have consented to the manner I thought my self oblig'd to treat his accuser in; for tho' he has had no regard to the public Friendship you have express'd for him; yet I know you have not resent'd the grossness of his public abuse of you, with indignation enough to permit me to deal with him in the same manner; for what was said of a great Lord, is fully as true of you, viz. that you are

*The best natur'd Man, with the worst natur'd Muse,*

for tho' there is nothing so strong and so cutting as your Satire; yet is there nothing so easie and so affable as your Temper and Conversation. Pardon me, I will speak what I know of you, and let my Enemies make the best on't, whose Malice I value not, if I can but prevail with you to forgive this boldness

THE



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*The Ingenious and Honourable  
Theocrine to Theopompus ;  
shewing Her the faithfullest of  
Lovers , and most Pious of  
Children.*

**A**LL your Letters are at last arriv'd safe, tho' it happen'd with them, as in a great many other things : what shou'd a came first, came last, by which I'm sorry to find, that one who is to judge of Souls, knows no better how to judge of Merit ; else whatever your request had been, it had been granted. I wish all that can serve the generous *Theopompus*, had my sense of his deserts, then shou'd the Friend of my dear *Poliarchus* be rais'd, as far above those self Interest'd Wretches, as his Soul now is, and *Generosity* was above theirs. For most of the sordid World, neither know how to reward the living, nor how to do justice to the dead ; but these are crimes unknown to all that were inspir'd with the Friendship for our dear *Poliarchus*.

There are few of the Troubles that attend us in this Life, but when we seriously examine their

Cause, we shall find we our selves in one kind or other, have in some degree contributed to 'em. For who can be of a generous Temper, and not bear a part with the Afflicted? this has (as it it does with all that are good) made you sensible of my sufferings, which has by an unforeseen Consequence brought the trouble of many impertinent Letters on your self; for 'tis impossible to suffer you ever to give over that pleasing Melancholy Subject you so ingeniously entertain me with. The Death of my *Poliarchus* is as lasting in my Memory as I am: and as I am the most unfortunate of Women by his loss, so can all other Afflictions be but like drops of Water into the abyss of the Sea: Yet have I met lately with an additional Grief, that bears a much greater proportion. That dear Mother I have been in care for, is now taken from me to augment the number of the blest above; my tender *Love*, and grateful *Duty*, was such for my unequal'd Parent, that had I not known how to live after the *Loss*, and Affliction you saw me in, I cou'd scarce have supported this; but **That** has made me know that *there is a vast difference betwixt Tears shed for those whom Death chooses, and Those who make choice of Death*, rather than live without what they too much valu'd. This vast conflux of misfortunes, gives me a greater desire to be assur'd what knowledge my departed Friends will have of me at our meeting in their blest abode, for since I've committed the sacred Memory of *Poliarchus* to your care, (which whilst I live, can never dye.) I am eternally entertaining  
all

all, I ~~can get~~ to listen with my sad Story; but you can make it from age to age endure. Time the certain cure, of all other ills can never lessen mine, so that I often resolve to seek out a solitude, where if Reason cannot overcome my *Grief*, *Grief* may overcome me, and make my wretched days short as I wish 'em, and my unhappy state requires.

I am extremely sensible of your generous compassion, and must tell you that when I first convert in this kind with the ingenious *Theopompus*, my Esteem cou'd then be grounded on no other score, but what great value he had for what deserv'd *Love* and *Esteem* from all the World, my *best* and dearest *Poliarchus*: But now you have engag'd me the way that most prevails with Humane Nature, by a *Real Sense* of my Pain. That is so generous a piece of good Nature, that 'tis to be admir'd wherever 'tis found; and in return, I wou'd if I cou'd forbear tormenting you any more with my Grief. But Ah! How can I cease my complaints to one, who so tenderly apprehends 'em, and so excellently applys the Cordial of unequal'd Advices. This makes you often troubl'd with my Melancholly Life; for I declare I had rather read your obliging Expressions for our dead Friend, than all the finest things the greatest of Mankind can say on any other Subject, but not to tire you all at once; I shall here conclude, that I am your Friend, and Servant.

*Theocrine.*

TO

To ACME, before I had seen her.

I Ought not in Prudence (Madam) to let you know the unreasonable extent of your Charms, for fear it destroy the Happiness I aim at in your *Pity*; Cruelty and Pride being generally the effect of so *Unlimited* a Power. Yet, since you cannot pity, without knowing the Sufferer, I must inform you, Divine Maid, that I have increas'd the number of your Slaves, without so much as the pleasure of seeing you for all the Sighs you have cost me.

Love indeed is an Off'ring that ought to be laid on the soft Altars of Beauty; But, Madam, sure never was by any, but my self, on that of an *Unknown Deity*. We keep the *Bleeding Victims* of our Hearts, as long as we can, and only yield 'em up to the *Irresistible Force* of the present Fair One.

This, Madam, is the common Condition of Lovers; but as my Passion has an extraordinary Object in you, so have your Beauties an uncommon Influence on me: for Charm'd by I know not what *Divine Witchery*, I Sacrifice my poor Heart to your very Name, without putting you to the expence of one killing Look, to oblige me to't; Report has often engag'd the *Curiosity*, but never till now won the *Affections*.

The first mention of you inspir'd me with all the tender Thoughts of Love; and being oblig'd to personate the Lover in Print, I had Recourse to the *Divine Idea*, I had form'd of you, Madam, to  
qualifie



qualifie me for it ; you were the only *Heavenly Muse* that I invok'd, which abundantly furnish'd me with all the Transporting Raptures of Love. But alas ! Madam, while I too much gave way to Imagination, it carry'd me to a View of those Joys, none but you can impart, at least too charming fair one, so much justice is due to the most uncommon of *Lovers*, as to permit him the Blessing of your Conversion.

Ah ! Madam, excel the rest of your Sex in Perfections of Mind, as much as you do in those of Body, and let not *Pride* and *Cruelty* level you with 'em ; like a lawful Prince maintain the Glory of your Empire, by the happiness of your Vassals, and be not like a Tyrant, proud of their Destruction, at least permit the address of the greatest of

*Slaves,*

Septimius.

To ACME, after I had seen her.

Whatever Doubts you were pleas'd to make of my passion before I saw you, Madam, because so uncommon ; yet since I have now seen you, I hope you can no longer suspect the Reality of my love, for sure you must know 'tis impossible to behold that Face with an unwounded Heart.

'Twas

'Twas not at least possible for me (who came pre-engag'd with strong desires) to see you, without the extremity of Love.

I sigh'd and languish'd for you before, without the pleasure of feasting my greedy Eyes with the delicious banquet of your Looks. How often did I envy those your Eyes made slaves, whilst I fell a victim to your very Name, without a sight of that Heav'n I dy'd for? How often have I said,

*How blest, how more then happy must he Prove  
Who from her looks drinks in full draughts of Love,  
For after Pain he meets with present Joys;  
With a too envy'd Fate, dissolves and Dyes,  
In the vast Beatific Vision of her Eyes.*

these were my thoughts then Madam, and Imagination fell short of Reality; for I wou'd not for a thousand greater torments, than the vast increase of my passion has brought me, have been without that too too fleeting pleasure of seeing you last Sunday. 'Tis true, that was not sufficient to calm all my Grievs and Sighs. An empty view of Heaven, was not the utmost bounds of my Longing: and Love took it only as an earnest of greater Satisfaction, and now makes use of it, but to aggravate my sufferings, which nothing but your Pitty can lessen.

I wou'd not Madam, put you to too great an expence of Pitty at once, I only desire your leave to adore you, and a reviving look now and then to support my languishing Soul. I wish

I must confess your welcome Pity shou'd extend so far, as to admit the humblest and most loving of your Slaves sometimes to your Conversation; I wish too—but shou'd I trouble you with all my Wishes, it wou'd be endless, and thought perhaps presumptuous, for they are extravagant, and have no limits but in you, soaring as my *Love*, and Boundless as *your Charms*.

And cannot a Wreath thus toss'd, thus distract-ed with such hopeless Wishes, merit your Com-passion? Can nothing but Death atone for my loving you? And oh too charming *Acme!* I wish I were but as sure of your Pity, as I am of being the most miserable of Men whilst I live, and soon a Ghost without it.

Give me leave Madam, to hope you will not always deny it me—mistake me not. This hope is not built on an over-weening Confidence in my own Merits, (yet if Love be so I have the greatest) but on that noble Idea, I form of your Mind from the Beauty of your Body, for sure Na-ture cannot be so propostereous in the most *Solemn* of her Works, as to leave such outward perfection unfinish'd within. And pitty Madam, is the great-est and most consummate attribute of the No-blest Mind, as Beauty is of the Body.

Nay, Beauty is of no use nor Advantage with-out Pity, and the cruellest of your Sex must at last have recourse to it, after they have foolishly sacrific'd many of the precious hours of flying, and irrecoverable Youth to a barbarous and un-accountable Custom; if they resolve not, still more foolishly to fling away the greatest, and  
most

most valuable of Heav'n's Blessings Beauty, and Youth without making use of 'em.

The Misers of Money have more Reason, than those of Beauty: for the former have the store they spare still by them, to gratifie their Ambition or Pleasure of viewing it; but the latter deny themselves the enjoyment of that Treasure, that has no other use, and which they can't preserve with all their care; and 'tis the height of folly to spare that, which tho' we use not, flies swiftly from us without any Advantage, and which can never be recover'd.

Be not therefore, my adorable *Acme*, so improvidently *Provident*, of the fleeting Store, as to complement a senseless and customary Barbarity, at the expence of your *Justice* and *Reason*; they both demand your *Pitty* and your *Love*. For *Retaliation* is the Law of Justice, Love for Love, and Heart for Heart, as well as Eye for Eye, and Hand for Hand. And Reason wou'd perswade you to lay your coming Years out in Pleasure, and none so innocent, so lasting, and so vast as Love.

*Love's the most generous Passion of the Mind.*

*The safest Refuge Innocence can find.*

'Tis founded in Nature, the World and all Mankind owe their beings to't.

'Tis true Madam, I am not form'd with all that nice proportion, and that curious shape, that Fops are so proud of, and Women so much cover; but yet my Mind (nor is it a boast to say so) excels them. I dress not like a *Bean*, nor do I  
move



move by *Art*, but then, too charming *Acme*, I do not love by art as he does. My *Form*, my *Mien*, and my *Love* are of a Piece, plain and sincere, and only inform'd by Nature.

If all this merit not your *Love*, it must your *Pitty* and *Friendship*, and on any *Terms* I wou'd be admitted to the number of your *Slaves*.

Septimius

*To the Proud Acme.*

THE sending back my three last Letters, Madam, makes me suppose you can take no great Pleasure in detaining the former, and that I now do you a very grateful Office in sending for 'em. And Madam, you can't doubt but that it must be a wond'rous Satisfaction to one so infinitely enamour'd, as I am, to please you at any Rate. If you send 'em not, I shall conclude, that how-ever unacceptable the Offeren was, the Sacrifice was welcome; but if you return 'em, I shall have the mighty comfort amidst my Sighs, to kiss something that has touch'd those Hands, that are not us'd to bestow any Favours on Men in my Circumstances.

Well, Madam, since you are so cruel, 'tis well I've some other Balm in store for my wounded Heart; for Women to me like Scorpions, have always been their own Cure. If their Eyes have pierc'd my Heart, their Vanity, Folly or Pride, has generally restor'd it to perfect Health. And I am sensible that I shall never be entirely undone or lost in Love, 'till I meet with one as free from affected Coyness, as from

from affected *Languishments*, and such pretty *artificial* *Twists*; *designing* *Glances*, betwixt *Inco-  
ritation* and *Denial*, as are no small *Auxiliaries*  
in *Acme's* *Conquests*. The only *Bond*, Madam,  
that tyes my poor Heart forever, to the *Oar* of  
*Love*, is an *Innocent*, *Free*, and *Obliging* *Kind-  
ness*, *Sense*, and an *Agreeable* *Conversation*  
and *Humor*, with an *Exemption* from *Defects*  
of *Constitution*, and *Body*, that shall be name-  
less, for *Reasons* best known to my self. And  
'till I meet with such an one, my Heart, I thank  
my Stars, has so much the command of it self, as  
to admit as much, or as little of *Love* as it, plea-  
ses; else Madam, in what a *miserable* pickle shou'd  
I now have been d'c think? — *Sighing*, *Mourning*,  
and *Dying*, to no purpose? besides, *curling*,  
*Fate*, *Stars*, *Planets*, and all that (as *Mr. Bays*  
says) for a damn'd *Ingrate*?

But since 'tis now over no more of that, thou  
wondrous fair one, lest you shou'd think me yet  
your *Power*: but as my *Passion* for *Acme*, had a  
plaguy odd *Beginning*, so shall it here have full as  
*Odd* an ending. — For the *Duce* (or any thing,  
but your *Eyes*) take me, if I am not at this very  
individual *Moment* within ken of the *very* place,  
whence I set out in my *Voyage* of *Love*; in which  
since you'l not permit me to be your *Fellow* *Tra-  
veller*. I wish you *un bon Voyage*. Adieu,

Ma Belle Dame,

Adieu,

Septimius.

THE

*To the Ingenious* URANIA.

## LETTER I.

I Was extreamly uneasie, Madam, to be on such unequal Terms with you, whilst you know where to direct to me, tho I don't to you; and I confess, I thought it as great a Grievance as Vizor Masks, by which Women have the unreasonable Advantage of walking invisibly, when Men are forc'd e'ry where to go bare-fac'd: Yet as those would be more tolerable, if none but the Ugly and Indifferent wore'em, so should I with the greater Ease dispense with my Ignorance of a Direction to you, had you either none, or else less Wit than your Letters prove you have: For 'tis that Divine Charm that makes me desire to settle a Correspondence with *Urania*. Nor is this Desire opposite to your Resolution of remaining unknown: For there shall, upon Honour, be no further Inquiry made after you than you shall allow; tho G — persists in his Opinion, that you sacrifice your Wit and Sense to the Reputation of that trifling Sex you are not of; this not only the Wit of your former, but the polite Accuracy of all your Letters persuade him, since you are not only free from the false Spelling of most Women, but are so entirely exempt from false

K

English

English and Grammar, that you discover a better Acquaintance with *Lilly*, than to've pass'd no further, than that *Caution* you quote from his *Accidens*; besides some Beauties in the meer Writing down your Thoughts, which few Men Practise or Know.

I am of the same Opinion of you, Madam, I declared in my former; and because I would fain have you a Woman, believe you firmly to be so: And though *G* — be so positive, that the Diffidence you pretend of your self, is nothing but a cunning Subterfuge from the surest Evidence of your Sex, your Conversation, yet am I (taking you still for a very Woman) both pleas'd and dissatisfy'd with it; for tho' I am pleas'd, because it seems the Child of Modesty and Discretion, which seldom join with Wit, especially in a Woman; Yet am I dissatisfy'd with it, since I find 'twould deprive you of what it qualifies you for; Conversation, I mean, with Mankind, since that, not only secures you from the Fate which the Imprudent of your Sex, have for want of it, incur; but also because it renders you more desirable to Men of Sense.

But Madam, were we such formidable Creatures as you seem to make us, that you cou'd not Converse with us but you must be Ruin'd, yet is there no Danger from me, who have none of those engaging Accomplishments, that are the wondrous and bewitching Engines of your Sex's Destruction; as Wit, Shape, Dressing, Dancing and Singing; with the rest of the gay

Train



Train that take with the Fair : For I assure you I'm Ugly enough , and Dress ill enough to be a Wit, and yet am Dull enough to be Handsome, and a Beau. I can neither Sing nor Dance, and am yet very Impertinent ; for though I talk little, yet even that is nothing to the purpose. So that, Madam, from such a Man, the most distrustfull Lady need fear no Stratagem on her Affections, since they are generally taken by the Eye or Ear ; and if neither of them be won, the Fort of your Heart is secure, and Impregnable.

But referring this wholly to your self, all I shall beg, is a settl'd Correspondence with you, whether you be a real or counterfeit Woman ; and shall therefore conclude with acknowledging my Error in not taking more Notice of your *Welsh Friend* ; though it may well be Pardoned, if the Wit of the Indifter disarm'd all my satyric Rage, and made me rather sacrifice a just Indignation to her Praise, than forsake so pleasing a Theme, for so fruitless a Labor, as chastising those inhospitable *Britains*, who wou'd no more now have understood or improv'd the wholesom Satyre to Practice, than they did their Duty, when they made the Ingenious *Urania* their Enemy ; whom to retain my Friend, shall be the Endeavour of,

Madam,

Your humble Servant,

Viridomar.

## L E T T E R II.

*April the 2d. 93.*

**H**AVING at last recovered your Letter, Madam, I send this Answer to prevent your Trouble of Transcribing another Copy. First therefore, Madam, I must tell you, I'm infinitely Proud that you do me the Honor to fix your Correspondence with me; nor wou'd I for the World have the Happiness of this intercourse of Letters broke off on any Account, much less on one so trivial as you mention: For there's not a Line you send, but I esteem it more than the whole Revenue of the *Post-Office*. Though I must confess I could wish (and that with all my Heart) that you were not leaving the Town, because I find by this Letter, that there is no Danger of your Heart, if I shou'd be admitted to your Conversation: For I assure you, Madam, I am far from a Phoenix; though I may perhaps, have some Pretence to those your darling Qualities: And I hope the Ambition I shall always avow to be the Friend of *Urania*, will excuse the Vanity of being more Particular.

I hate Ingratitude where ever 'tis, and can't therefore think them Hero's, who espouse the Quarrel of the Ingratefull, let their Personal Bravery or Courage be never so great. Then, Madam, for Dissimulation, I can say this, that I'm far from loving it, and only practise it sometimes

times on Compulsion, as a necessary Evil; and to say Truth, the evident Necessity of it, has made it lose the Infamy of a Vice, with almost all, and gain'd it the Reputation of a Vertue, with the Politick and Wise: Nor can indeed any Man be free from it, unless he design to purchase the Name of a Mad-man, and frighten all he knows from his Company. Consider it a little, Madam, and I'm confident you'll allow a little Dissimulation necessary to the Decorum of good Breeding; for you can't think it proper to tell this superannuated Matron, that all the Paint on her Face will not hide the tell-tale Marks of Old Age; or that pretty prattling Virgin in all the gay Bloom of her Youth, that she's a Fool, and that she should be silent if she ha'n't a mind to sacrifice all the Trophies of her Eyes, to the Impertinence of her Tongue; Or that Beau of Sixty, that all his Charms are borrow'd from his Dress and Garniture; or that he's more the Creature of his Vallet, than of God Almighty, since the Vallet, has so extravagantly Transformed him from what God made him! And so on, to the rest of the Follies and Vices of Mankind. This wou'd be to make one's self more unacceptable than a *Memento Mori* in the midst of Joy and Pleasure. But to proceed, Madam, I'm free from Hypocrisie: Nor can I think any one an Hypocrite but an Atheist; nor any one an Atheist but a Fool. As for the Two next Endowments you require, viz. a Great Soul, and a true Nobleness of Mind, the Pra-

dice and different Opinions of the World, have  
 rendered the Terms so ambiguous, that the De-  
 finitions of Philosophy are of small Use : I must  
 therefore desire you to explain in your next,  
 what you mean by them, that so I may find how  
 far I can pretend to 'em ; for I'd fain be qua-  
 lified for the incomparable *Urania's* Friend.  
 Generosity (if I mistake not your Sense of the  
 Word) has been my *Vice* and *Punishment*. In  
 short, Madam, if by Good Humour you mean  
 Good Nature, I can put in some Claim to't ; but  
 if by't you understand a brisk Jest and jovial  
 Air, much Talk and more Laughs, Faith, Ma-  
 dam, I must own I'm not fond of making any  
 Pretence to't.

Thus much for the Qualities both Negative  
 and Affirmative you require in a Friend : Then  
 as for the Follies and Vices you Abominate, I  
 thank my Stars : I'm not very guilty of 'em, and  
 think Affectation equally criminal in Gayety, as  
 well as Gravity.

And now, Madam, since you have describ'd  
 the Phoenix that must win your Heart, give me  
 leave to present you with a rough Sketch of her  
 (that's almost as rare) that must make an ab-  
 solute Conquest of mine, (for as for transient  
*Amours*, one indifferently qualified may do.)  
 She must be moderately Fair but no Beauty ;  
 (and that's the reason I hinted at in my last, that  
 I was sorry you told me you were no Beauty) or  
 at least, if possible, only so in my Eye : She must  
 be neither Proud, nor Affect'd ; as Witty as *Ura-*

*nia*,



nia, yet as free from Opiniature and Obstinacy as I think her. I mean not by Wit, those noisic Repartees of the Coquettes of the Town, which you with justice Condemn, but a sensible Apprehension of things, which I'm confident you can't mean, when you term Wit a Scandal. In fine, Madam, she must be Easie and Free in her Conversation, very Gratefull, very Generous, and very Loving in her Nature: And when I find one so qualified, I'm entirely her Slave.

But whilst I pursue my Thoughts, I find my Letter grow too long, which is one Fault of a whining Lover, who being much your Aversion, I'll here conclude with an humble Request that I may have Leave to hope I shall one Day be so Happy, as to be admitted to your Conversation: For that, Madam, I must own is the greatest Ambition of

*Your humble Servant*

Viridomar.

### LETTER III.

**Y**Our Raillery, Madam, on my Loss of your Letter, is as Just, as Witty; and I confess with a great deal of Confusion, I can make no Apology for't, unless an Assurance that I'll never trust your Letters in my Pocket again, at least with any other Papers.

I think my self extreamly Happy that I can please *Urania* in any thing; and truly, Madam, 'twas the real Value I have for you, that made me alter the Medium of our Correspondence, because my Brother had the Assurance not only to reflect upon the Direction you sent me, but also to shew your Letter to more than I desir'd shou'd have that Pleasure without your Permission. This Dealing with his Brethren of— might be Pardonable, because they have some Dependance on him; but the Respect that's due to your Merit, and the Justice that's due to me, might have curb'd his Curiosity within the Bounds of Good Manners.

I hope, Madam, you'll forgive me this Discovery and Heat, for your Letter has made me an irreconcilable Enemy to Dissimulation, who before was never any Friend to it. You have Madam, new Molded me to your own Desire; and that Vice appears now so very Ugly and Unmanly, that I'm extreamly asham'd I ever said a word in its Vindication: But above all, I shall think it a crying Sin, to dissemble with the Divine *Urania*, and for that reason, Madam, I must tell you, that my Conversation with both Sexes, has given me some reason to think I'm pretty well acquainted with the general Inclinations of Mankind; this, when I read your account of your self, makes you seem to me to describe an Angel, not a Woman: The glorious Image you give me of *Urania*, by the Vertues she doats on, and the Vices she abhors, is so extreamly

treably uncommon, that it looks like the divine Draught of some Inspired Poets Fancy, when he informs us, by a great Example of his own Creating, what we shou'd be, and not like a Reality. And your Prose has the effect of his Numbers, conveying Instruction in its most grateful Vehicle Pleasure, and so fixes the noble Idea in my Soul, and makes me in love with your Mind, before I see your Person: And you shall never persuade me, that Conversing with you, can ever lessen my Esteem for you: For tho the Writings of some of the most Ingenious afford a more agreeable Entertainment, than their Company, yet we may lose a great deal of their Excellency by not taking their Thoughts right; which made *Martial* tell *Fidentinus*, that by ill repeating his Verses, he made 'em his own: Besides, Madam, there are a thousand Graces in the delivery that abundantly improve the Sense, a fair Lady speaks, which must encrease her Esteem, and which we lose when Absent. And, Divine *Urania*, since your Heart is secure in very good hands already, I can see no reason, (forgive my Freedom) why you shou'd deny this Favour, since I leave to your self the management of the Interview, and give you my Word, that you shall have the entire government of my Discourse and Actions.

But, Madam, tho I have a more earnest longing to Converse with *Urania*, than Slaves for Liberty, the sick for Health, the poor for Riches, and the Ambitious for Honours; yet Divine,  
unknown,

unknown, such a respect I have, such a profound Veneration for you, that I would Sacrifice even this Content ( which perhaps is not of less value than even Life it self ) to your least Inconvenience, if I was sure it could not be obtain'd without prejudice to *Urania*.

I have a great deal to say about the Greatness and Nobleness of Mind you describe, but that would be too long for a Letter that has already exceeded its just Bounds; and I hope, I may have the Liberty to deliver my Sentiments by word of Mouth; only I must say that reason, not Opinion, general or particular, ought to decide so weighty a Point. But upon the whole, Madam, by the Vices you lay down as its Opposites I may presume to make some small pretention to it.

I would fain know what more than good Nature goes to the composing good Humour, since *Urania* says there is more; I take not good Nature in that general sense you hint at, but for a freedom from Malice, Envy, Moroseness, &c. but if any part of Gaiety be required, I'm at a loss, for I'm naturally of a Melancholy disposition, and dull heavy Conversation, as I formerly told you; and perhaps this want of an Airy Temper, with a little foolish Modesty I've always been troubled with, is that, that has made me still so Unsuccessful with the Fair, that none could ever be in Love with me, whilst others with as few Brains, more Vanity, and if possible, less agreeable Persons have prevail'd. *Waller* says, *Women stoop to the Forward and the Bold,* which



which are no ingredients in my Character, at least in Love, and my Converse with your Sex. So that, Madam, I hope you'll scruple no more to give me leave to wait on you, and as I prove, admit me into your Esteem, at least as far as cold Friendship will allow; or discard me for ever, a greater Curse than which cannot fall on the Head of,

*Madam,*

*Your Humble Servant,*

*and (if you'll give me leave to say so)*

*True Friend,*

*Viridomarus*

## LETTER IV.

*May 5. 83.*

**C**OMING to Town last night, and having perused yours, I think your Anger, Madam, against the Bookseller, very just, since 'tis indeed a Scandal to any Name in the opinion of the most Sensible part of the Town, to be in these *Mercuries*; and the Zeal I was told you had for 'em, made

made me read your first Letters with some Prejudice, till spight of all that disadvantage, your Wit and Address raised my Admiration, which with each Letter encreasing, begot this importunate desire, you resist with so causeless and severe an Obstinacy. *Causeless*, Madam, because my Opinion of a grant of a Request, pursued with that ardour and importunity, wou'd be pure as your Stile, and just as your Thoughts; for I'm none of those censorious formal Hypocrites, that can receive the Favour, and yet condemn the Benefactor that bestowed it. *Severe* to Extravagance to make the very Desire its own Obstacle, after our most reasonable Parts have brought us acquainted. Sure, Divine *Urania*, you'll grant, that our Correspondence is in reason a more honourable Introduction to Friendship, than a Visit or two with a Friend; yet after this last, the most scrupulous Lady will permit one to wait on her.

You must therefore, Madam, Pardon me, if what you have urg'd, do not reconcile me to your Denial; nor have you by any means as good Reasons for this, as against Dissimulation; for there you oppos'd the common Practice generally Erroneous, but here vindicate its falsest Principle.

The Body of good Humour I have, but want the Spirit and Life, Facetiousness, which perhaps your Conversation may inspire, as Dull as I am.

Your

Your Letters Madam, can never be too long; for as you find I can never write a short Letter to you, so I desire none from you but long ones, since their perusal is, if not the only, yet the greatest Pleasure of,

*Madam,*

*Your Humble Servant,*

*and Admiring Friend,*

*Viridomar.*

## LETTER V.

**A**Ssure your self, admired *Urania*, that this generous Compliance of yours with my repeated Importunities to see you, shall never cause any opinion but what is the natural Result of your Conduct in it; that is, that you are a Lady of Sense and Honour; and I only think you have us'd too much Caution in this tedious delay: You have sacrificed abundantly too much time to Formality and Custom, for 'tis those two, that make the Ladies more hard of access than Men. My first Letter had been sufficient to have gain'd me admission to any *Man*, nay, to *Hobbs* himself; and where our Esteem for a  
 Lady

Lady is of the same nature, viz. a Love of her Mind, bounded with a just Friendship, all delays are but needless Cautions. I only urge this, Madam, to show you how far I'm from entertaining any ill thoughts of the dear Favour you bestowed on me in your Last; and I'm abundantly assured, that the Satisfaction of your Conversation will answer my Expectation; for whatever you may think of dull Terrestrial Conversation (true in reference to what my Alloy will give it) 'tis my opinion it cannot be dash'd with much of Earthly Dulness where *Urania* is to give it Life and Spirit.

You have reason I must confess to be something cautious in making a new Friendship with one you know not, since you have been Deceived; so much deceived in one you thought you might so well depend on as *Asdrubal*, whose Name was well suited to his Nature, and if of his own choice, certainly his *Punic* Faith made him so fond of a *Carthaginian* Name. But since Experience can't secure you in a Friend, I fantasie Madam, 'twould not be Impolitick to try what Chance will do; throw your self entirely on that, and be absolutely my Friend without any more Caution. Mr. Dryden says,

*There's a necessity in Fate*

*Why still the brave bold Man is Fortunate.*

The Cautious sift things with a too nice and jealous Eye to be easily Happy, whereas, if we will



will really be so, we must a little contribute to the cheating our selves into an opinion of it; for Happiness is nothing but Opinion; and tho this sometimes end too soon, yet it makes some amends, by the Pleasure it gave us whilst we entertain'd the dear Amusement; whereas, the Cautious are always in pain to avoid Pain, which is like dying for fear of Death. Let not, therefore the perfidious Ingratitude of the faithless *Carthaginian* influence your Judgment of *Hymen*, who is not only an irreconcilable Enemy to Ingratitude and Insincerity, but a hater of all Common Wealths, because they have always signaliz'd their Ingratitude, and indeed lie under a necessity of always being so: So that the thing you dislike in me, ought to be your greatest satisfaction and assurance of my Fidelity and Honour, in chusing rather to Suffer, than Triumph; for I have a Soul ambitious as any Man; but, *Urania* 'tis a brave Ambition governs me: I wou'd be Great and Just, but rather Just than Great. I wou'd be Great, to have it in my power to do Good, to destroy those Villains that Influence the Best of Princes, and make them act contrary to their Natures; for I cou'd shew a Path Princes might tread to Power, Wealth and Honour, consistent with the Love, the Interest, and the Glory of their Countries: But cou'd I make my Country the Envy of *Europe* and Mistress of both the *Indies*, and of a lasting Unity at Home, I wou'd not part with my Faith, my Honour, nor my Sincerity to effect it.

it. Let not *Asdrubal* therefore be the Rule of your Judgment of *Viridomar*, but assure your self I wou'd not yield to you in Faith and Sincerity: And as you will atone for all the faults I have experienced in your 'ex, so I'll act with such an emulation of your Vertues, that I'll force you to confess I differ from most Men. Oh! I wou'd Die before I'd make my Friend and Benefactor my Tool, my Step to pass the dirty Plashes of my Fortune, and then Regard her no more, as *Asdrubal* has done: No, let me be Just and Poor, rather than thrive by Villainy. A Woman qualified like *Urania*, ought to be valued above the World, and shall by *Viridomar*, if she admits his Friendship.

I tell you my whole Soul, *Urania*, you see it naked as *Heaven*, and void of all Disguise; I'm weary of this Villainous World, and the endless as well as bootless Impertinencies of the Conversations of my own Sex, a wretched Circle they move in, of Prophaneness, Nonsense and Hurry; I have had too large a share in this foolish Prize, these destructive Baubles of the Town, that Men like Fools, bedeck themselves withal; proud of their very Infamy: I Long, I Sigh for a dear Refuge from them all, and nothing like the Converse of *Urania*, whose Sense, as well as Sex, affords a more reasonable and calmer Joy; the sense of it transports my Mind with such a strange Impetuosity to establish a Friendship with you, that I'm extremely uneasy till I see you, and shall expect *Friday* with the most impatient desire, when according

according to your appointment, I'll certainly wait on you, and with this send you the thanks of the most grateful Mind, for this Generous Condescension to the Importunity of,

*Madam,*

*Your faithful and sincere*

*Friend and Humble Servant,*

*Viridomar.*

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*An Essay at a Vindication of Love  
in Tragedies, against Rapin and  
Mr. Rymer.*

*Directed to*

*Mr. DENNIS.*

**T**HE short yet just Account you give in your Prefatory Epistle to the *Impartial Critic*, of the Reasons that hindered the *Gracians* from bringing the tender Scenes of Love on the Stage in their Tragedies; makes me wish you had proceeded to a full Vindication of the Practice of our Poets in that particular; and indeed this Letter is design'd to provoke you to such an Undertaking, which wou'd effectually stop the Clamours of some *Cynical Critics*, that will not  
L allow

allow any thoughts of Love agreeable to the Majesty of Tragedy.

The chief Arguments indeed which these Gentlemen bring, are from the Practice of the Ancients, ( the cause of which, you have given in the above quoted Epistle ) whose Authority they are of opinion shou'd out-weigh Reason. But since the *Ipsè dixit* has been so long laid aside in Philosophy, as an enemy to our Enquiries into Nature, I can see no reason why it shou'd be of so much greater force in Poetry; since 'tis perhaps almost as prejudicial to our imitation of Nature in *This*, as to our discovery of it in the Other. As far as the Ancients and the Rules *Aristotle* draws from them, agree with the Character you givethese, of being *nothing but good sense and Nature reduc'd to Method*, I shall close with them; but when they either deviate from this, or reach not up to what may be done, I must think it but just to withdraw my self from the subjection of the *Stagyrite*, who has had a Reign long enough o'er the Minds of Mankind, and an Empire that far exceeded the Extent and Continuance of his Royal Papil *Alexander*.

But to deal fairly with our Opponents, I shall first propose all their Objections against this Opinion I Defend, as I find them in *Rapin*, and his Copier, Mr. *Rymer*; and then examine how far they are from being fortified by Reason, as their Admirers boast. I shall begin with *Rapin*; and that he may be sure to have Justice, I shall Quote him as his Friend has Translated him: *Re-*  
*flect.* 20. p. 110.

Modern



Modern Tragedy turns on other Principles: the Genius, of our ( the French ) Nation is not Strong enough to sustain an Action on the Theatre, by moving only Terror and Pity. These are Machines that will not play as they ought, but by great Thoughts and noble Expressions, of which we are not indeed altogether so capable as the Greeks. Perhaps our Nation which is naturally Gallant, has been oblig'd to the necessity of our Character, to frame for our selves a new System of Tragedy, to suit with our humor. The Greeks, who were Popular Estates, and who hated Monarchy, took delight in their Spectacles, to see Kings Humbled, and high Fortunes cast down, because their Exaltation griev'd them. The English, our Neighbours, love Blood in their Sports, by the quality of their Temperament. These are Insularies separated from the rest of Men; we are more Humane. Gallantry moreover agrees with our Manners; and our Poets believ'd that they cou'd not succeed on the Theatre, but by sweet and tender Sentiments; in which perhaps they had some Reason: For in effect, the Passions represented become Deform'd and Insipid, unless they are founded on Sentiments conformable to those of the Spectator. 'Tis this obliges our Poets to stand up so strongly for the Privilege of Gallantry on the Theatre, and to bend all their Subjects to Love and Tenderness; the rather to please the Women, who have made themselves Judges of these Divertisements, and usurped the Right to pass Sentence. And some besides have suffer'd themselves to be prepossess'd, and led by the Spaniards, who make all their Cavaliers Amo-

rous. 'Tis by them that Tragedy began to degenerate; and we by little and little accusom'd to see Heroes on the Theatre smitten with another Love than that of Glory; and that by degrees, all the Great Men of Antiquity have lost their Characters in our Hands. 'Tis likewise perhaps by this Gallantry that our Age would devise a Colour to excuse the feebleness of our Wit, not being able always to sustain the same Actions by the greatness of Words and Thoughts.

However it be, (for I am not hardy enough to declare my self against the Public) 'tis to degrade Tragedy from that Majesty, which is proper to it, to mingle it in Love, which is of a Character always light, and little suitable to that Gravity of which Tragedy makes Profession. \* Hence it proceeds, that these Tragedies mixt with Gallantries, never make such admirable Impressions on the Spirit, as did those of Sophocles and Euripides; for all the Bowels were mov'd by the great Objects of Terror and Pity, which They propos'd. 'Tis likewise for this that the Reputation of our Modern Tragedies so soon Decays, and yields but small Delight at two Years end; whereas the Greek please yet to those that have a good Taste, after two Thousand Years; because what is not grave and serious on the Theatre, tho it give Delight at present, after a short time grows Distasteful and Unpleasant; and because what is not proper for great Thoughts and great Figures in Tragedy, cannot support it self. The Ancients who perceived this, did not Interweave their Gallantry and Love, save in Comedy. \* For Love is of a Character that always degenerates from that Heroic Air  
of

of which Tragedy must never divest it self. And nothing to me seems so mean and senseless, as for one to amuse himself with whining about frivolous Kindnesses, when he may be admirable by great and noble Thoughts, and sublime Expressions. \* But I dare not presume so far on my own Capacity and Credit, to oppose my self of my own Head, against a Usage so Establish'd. I must be content modestly to propose my Doubts, and that may serve to exercise the Wits, in an Age that only wants Matter. But to end this Reflection with a touch of Christianity, I am persuaded, that the Innocence of the Theatre might be better preserv'd, according to the Idea of the ancient Tragedy; because the New is become too Effeminate, by the Softness of later Ages; and the Prince de Conti, who signaliz'd his Zeal against the Modern Tragedy, by his Treatise on that Subject, would without doubt, have allow'd the Ancient, because that has nothing that may seem Dangerous.

Then for Mr. Rymer, in his jovial way of Criticism, he condemns Love on the Stage in these Words, brought in indeed by Head and Shoulders.

After all, it is to be observ'd how much that Wild-Goose Chase of Romance runs still in their Heads, some Scenes of Love must ev'ry where be shuffled in, tho never so Unseasonable.

The Græcians were for Love and Music, as well as any Monsieur of them all, yet their Music kept within Bounds, attempted no Metamorphosis to turn the Dramma into an Opera. Nor did their Love come Whining on the Stage to Effeminate the Ma-

jeſty of Tragedy. *It was not any Love for Brifeis, that made Achilles ſo Wroth, it was the Affront in taking his Booty from him, in the Face of the Confederate Army. This his Stomach could not Digelt.*

Nec gravem  
Pelcidæ Stomachum cedere nescii. *Hor.*

THESE are the Pillars and Supports of the Gentlemen of this Opinion; so that I hope, if I can but obviate these Objections they bring, I have gained the End propos'd to my self in the Justification of the Practice of the best of our Poets, in presenting us with the tenderest Scenes of Love in Tragedies. 'Tis true; the Charge of both these Critics, is directed against the *French* Poets, but in the excluding Love, as derogatory to the Majesty of Tragedy, it reaches our Poets, who do the same. I have Quoted *Rapin* at large, because one part of the Reflection seems to answer the other to my Hand; for the ground of his Accusation is the deviating from the Practice of the Ancients; for which he gives so good Reasons, that 'twould have been a madness not to have form'd a new System, since the Genius, the Character, Humour and Manners of the People, required as much. He says, that, *In effect the Passions represented become deform'd and insipid, unless they are founded on Sentiments conformable to those of the Spectator.* But before I proceed to any particular Reply, I shall draw the Objections



ons both contain, into short and positive Heads, to make their Confutation the more Evident.

The whole Charge therefore, may be reduc'd to these three Heads, the 1. Motives the Moderns (particularly the *French*) had to Introduce Love into Tragedy. 2. The Objections against it: And, 3. The Effects of it. *First*, As to the Motives, *Rapin* tells us, they were the *Necessity* of the Character, Manners, and Temperament of the People, (which, without doubt, was the Poet's Duty to regard.) *Next*, to gratify the Women Judges, (which is the Poet's Duty as a Man, both in Regard of his Profit and Sex, especially when the Interest and Power of the Women strike in with the Character, Manners, and Temperament of the People.) *Lastly*, To excuse the Feebleness of their own *Wit*. These are the Motives *Rapin* sums up of this Innovation on the Stage; which, as I have before observed, are a sufficient Justification of it, even according to himself: But for the last, 'tis only a morose Caprice of his own Fancy, for certainly there is as much Wit required to the Just, and artificial Management of the Passion of Love; as those of Fear and Terror, and those other Species of Passions that are subservient to the moving of them.

I shall therefore pass to the Objections, which are four in Number, the First and Chief (in some Mens Opinion) is, That it deviates from the Practice of the Ancients; who, as the Inventors of Tragedy, challenge our Imitation.

'Tis they must be our Model, and as we make more or less Approaches to that in the Fabrics of our Plays, we are in a greater or lesser Degree of Perfection. I grant indeed, that the Ancients were the Inventors of Tragedy; nay, and of Comedy too; 'tis their due Glory. Nor will I pretend to rob 'em of it. I will also grant, that there is some Regard to be had to their Performances, as to their Model; but then I deny that by the Rules of Reason, we are oblig'd to a servile Observation of their Precepts, or Practice, without all Addition, or Improvement. Had the Practice of the First Inventors been of such *Inviolable* Authority, *Thespis* had brought Tragedy to its Perfection, and one Actor, and a deal of Chorus (more ridiculous than an entire Opera) had been the *non plus ultra* of the Stage. But if it were lawful for *Aeschylus*, *Euripides*, *Sophocles* and others, to improve upon the Model *Thespis* had left them, why should other Poets, great as those in Genius, be deprived of the same Liberty, provided it be for the Advancement of the Profit, and Glory of Tragedy? Upon this Condition I do suppose, none will deny the Moderns this Liberty to forsake the Steps of the *Greeks*. But that our Alterations are for the better, will appear from the After-proofs, as well as from what I shall here say on this Particular.

First, Then 'tis evident from what you, Sir, have urged in the *Impartial Critic*, That the leaving off the Chorus is for the better, since it  
 will  
 frees

frees it from an unnatural Part, which took up so large a Share of the ancient *Tragedies*; and in that, delivers it from the absurdest Improbabilities in Nature, which are as destructive to the End of Tragedy as any thing that can be introduced. Next, it has enlarged the Bottom on which the ancient *Tragedy* stood, and by Consequence extended its Use and Advantage further. It has made it a more perfect Image of Humane Life, in taking in that which has so great a Share in it, LOVE; which whether it be derogatory to the *supposed* Majesty of Tragedy, I shall next examine; if not, my Assertion is evident.

This indeed is the next Objection of our Adversaries, who tell us, *That the Lightness of Love degrades the Majesty and Gravity of Tragedy, diverting it from Great, and Noble Thoughts, and Sublime Expressions, to whining about frivolous Kindnesses.* This I confess is the heaviest Charge in Reality, if true, and therefore I shall take the greatest Pains to remove it; for if Love be not guilty of this, 'tis evidently an *Improvement*, and therefore to be continued in that Possession of the Stage, it has gain'd with so universal an Approbation.

All the Arguments I shall bring to prove that it is not derogatory to the Majesty of *Tragedy* shall be drawn from — the Consideration of their Beloved Ancients; the very Meaning of the Word Majesty; and the Nature of the Passion of Love, and its Place in Regard to the others.

First,

First, 'Tis evident from the very Concessions of *Rapin*, the Agreement of all Critics, and the very Nature of the Thing, That *Tragedy* is not of greater *Majesty*, and *Dignity*, than an *Epic Poem*. In his Fourth General Reflection, he tells us, That from *Homer's* Epic Poems, *Sophocles* and *Euripides* took the *Haughty Air of the Theatre*, and *Idea's of Tragedy*; and begins the second Particular Reflection thus: *The Epic Poem is that which is the Greatest, and most Noble in Poësie*. To prove which he spends all that Reflection, and the magnifying of it takes up the Third and Fourth, and at the End of the Tenth-particular Reflection he tells us, *That All ought to be Majestic in an Heroic Poem*. This also seems to be confess'd by Mr. *Rymer*, when he, speaking of *Love's* effeminating the *Majesty of Tragedy*, Instances an *Heroic Poem*, viz. the *Iliads of Homer*, foreseeing perhaps that that might be objected against his Assertion, which is still in full force notwithstanding his saying, That 'twas not the *Love of Achilles for Briseis*, that made him so wroth, but the *Indignity received in the Face of the Confederate Army*. But besides this Concession of our Opposers (which is indeed Argument good enough ad *Hominem*) the very Nature of the thing proves the same. *Hero's and Kings* are the Subjects of both, and the principal Character of an *Epic Poem*, consists in the *Narration* (as *Rapin* truly observes) in which it is only opposed to *Tragedy*, which consists altogether in *Action*.

The



The Majesty of an *Epic Poem* being thus demonstrated equal, if not superiour to that of Tragedy. If I can prove by the Practice of *Homer* and *Virgil* (the greatest of Heroic Poets) that they esteem'd not Love derogatory to the Majesty of their *Poems*, 'tis Proof-sufficient that it cannot degrade the Majesty of *Tragedy*, which is not greater than the other.

But this is evident from the *Iliads* of *Homer*, and the *Aeneids* of *Virgil*. *Homer* in his *Iliads* makes *Achilles* and *Agamemnon* in Love, one with his Captive *Briseis*, the other with *Chryseis*: For *Agamemnon* tells *Achilles* and the Council of the *Grecians*, that he prefers *Chryseis* to *Chyrennestra* the Wife of his Youth; and that she is not inferiour to her in any of her Qualities or Beauties. He often calls her Beautiful *Chryseis*, and always speaks very feelingly when he mentions her. And *Achilles* his Anger had not rose to that Degree, but that he was depriv'd of his Rosie-Cheek'd *Briseis*. *Horace* was of my Opinion, in his Second Epistle Book 1.

*Hunc Amor, ira quidem urit utrumq;*

Which you very justly *English* thus,

*Whose injur'd Love, in both strange Fury breeds.*

For the Rise of *Agamemnon's* Passion is evidently from his Love to *Chryseis*, as he plainly confesses in his Expressions; and that of *Achilles*

was not only exaggerated, but confirm'd by the same Loss of her he Lov'd. *Quid in his Amours, lib. 2. is of the same Mind,*

*Thessalus ancille facie Briseidos arsit :  
Sera Mycenæo Phœbus amata duci.*

And in other Places he has to the same purpose. Besides in the Third Book of the *Iliads*, when *Hector* proclaims the Challenge of *Paris*, to fight *Menelaus* in single Combat, the Condition is, that the Victor shou'd possess *Helen* for his Wife. If this be not below the Majesty of an *Epic Poem*, certainly the Nobler Scenes of Love cannot be below that of *Tragedy*. But the Case is yet plainer in *Virgil*, for the Fourth Book of his *Æneids*, is wholly on the Intrigue of *Æneas* and *Dido*, where that Divine Poet has given the finest Draught of that Passion that Antiquity can boast of. But if this Criminal Passion of *Dido* and *Æneas*, do not degrade the Majesty of an *Epic Poem*, can the same, or less Criminal, be below that of *Tragedy*? This Book is not arraign'd by our Criticks for any Defect in this, and by others allow'd as noble a Piece as any of that Poet, so that Love is not such an Enemy to Noble Thoughts, but that 'tis consistent with them; nor to the Majesty of Expression, as this Fourth Book of *Virgil* evinces. Besides, we find in the *Alcestes* of *Euripides*, an Attempt of Love, and something of it in the

*Ajax*

*Ajax* of *Sophocles*; nay, 'tis the Foundation and Fable of the *Phœdra* of *Euripides*.

Thus we see the Enemy beat from one of their beloved Holds, the Authority and Practice of the Ancients. I shall now therefore, proceed to the very Meaning of the Word *Majesty*; by which we shall be able to discover how far it will contribute to the Confirmation of our Position.

To let alone the Grammatical Etymology of the Word, and take it in its Poetical Sense, where 'tis Metaphorically us'd, it means something that is Great and Pompous. And *Horace* in the fourth Satyre of his First Book, means this *Majesty* we talk of, when he says,

*Primum ego illorum dederim quibus esse Poetas  
Excerptam Numero: Neque enim concludere versum  
Dixeris esse satis; neq; si quis scribat uti nos  
Sermoni propria, putes hunc esse Poetam  
Ingenium cui sit, cui mens diviniore, atq; os  
Magna sonaturum, des nominis huius honorem.*

So that *Majesty*, is nothing else but an Elevation of Thoughts, and Expression above the Common and Vulgar Discourse. By this Explanation of it, it becomes intelligible, and we shall see, that the Critics wou'd only amuse us with Words. Now if they can prove by Reason, that the Thoughts and Expressions of Love in its several Effects and Emotions, cannot be exalted above the Vulgar, and Common Discourse, then is Love of too low a Character for Tragedy.

dy. But if Love be not incapable of this Elevation, then is our Point gain'd in this Particular too, which will be evinc'd from the next Proof, drawn from the *Nature of the Passion of Love, and its Place in regard to the others.*

A Passion is more or less *Majestic*; (and by Consequence, more or less fit for Tragedy) in regard either of the Rank or Degrees of the *Passions*, of the Sentiments it inspires, the Effects it causes, the Actions that depend upon it, or in fine, the Influence it has on the Life of Mankind.

If the First, 'tis evident that *Love* has much the Preheminence above *Terror* and *Pity*. *Des Cartes* reduces all the Passions to Six principal Heads, *Admiration, Love, Desire*, (or rather *Concupiscence, Joy and Grief*.) *Dr. Moor* reduces them to Three Heads only, *Admiration, Love and Hate*. The first of which being plac'd in the Brain, and being but the Step to the other, he with the School-men reduces them yet to Two, the *Concupiscible* and the *Iracible*; which *Des Cartes* terms in other Words, properly *Love and Hate*. So that we see *Love* on all Hands, appears to be a Primitive Passion, out of several Degrees of which, and its Opposite, are the rest compounded and deriv'd. *Fear* or *Terror* is deriv'd from *Desire*, *Desire* from *Love*, *Com-miseration* is deriv'd from *Grief*, *Grief* from *Hate*; and is compounded of *Love* and *Grief*. So that if we respect the Degrees of the Passions, *Love* is the more Excellent, as being a Primitive Passion, but *Fear* and *Pity*, only under-



der-Species and Derivatives from it : So that in Nature, Love is more Noble than those. Let us therefore proceed to the *Sentiments* it inspires, &c. By Sentiments I mean the *Thoughts* that a *Lover* derives from the Passion he's possess'd with. But these are so different, that we must run through the several Conditions of Lovers to make any Judgment of 'em : For those Thoughts that proceed from *Anger*, *Fear*, *Jalousie*, *Hope*, *Despair* ; nay, and *Hate*, with the rest of the Passions, are to be look't for in a Lover, according to his several Circumstances. But take him in his most easie and tranquil Station, when tendrest Desires are fann'd with sure Success, his Thoughts are more or less elevated, according to the State and Degree of the Person that's affected. Those of a Shepherd might be too low, those of a *Beau* too Gay and Light, but those of a *Hero* must retain something of his Character, and must be Noble as the Object that inspires, or the Person that receives the Inspiration. The Two First indeed may be below the Dignity of Tragedy, but the latter can no more derogate from that, than from the Character of the Person. But supposing the most tender and the softest Scenes of a *Hero's* Love are not Majestic enough for Tragedy ; yet must they be Granted as lofty as those of his *Griefs* ; and in the latter, *Horace* will have the descending from the haughty Air and Majesty of Tragedy, not only allowable, but absolutely necessary : *De Arte Poetica* :

Et

*Et Fragicus plerumq; dolet sermone pedestri*  
*Telephus & Peleus, cum pauper & exul uterq;*  
*Proijci ampullas, & sesquipedalia verba,*  
*Si curat cor spectantis tetigisse querelâ, &c.*

There is a time therefore when the *Hero* not only may, but ought to quit his Grandeur, in *Horace's* Judgment; and that is when he's in Distress and in Exile. And why is it less lawfull to depart from this Majesty (that is, supposing Love requires it) on the Account of the tenderest Hours of Love? This is more natural in my poor Opinion, than in the Case justified by *Horace*. For to Love, is natural to all Great Souls, and I think, as Noble and Essential to their Character, as any that make it up: But it may be doubted whether a *Hero*, that is, a Man of Invincible Courage, can suffer all his noble and towering Thoughts, all his *Elation of Mind*, to be so depress'd by Adversity, as to submit to sordid and mean Grief and Sorrow: This may be the Reason why some Critics have reflected on the *Oedipus Coloneus* of *Sophocles*, as too low and mean for the Dignity of a *Hero* furnish'd with Resolution, Courage and Virtue in his other Play of him. 'Tis true, 'tis the general Frailty of Mankind to be dejected in Misfortunes; but Tragedy, as our Critics contend, should be something better than the Life, something more Philosophical, affording a Draught of what Man should be: Now 'tis certain that Philosophy will not allow Fortune any Influence on the Thoughts and Mind, at least so far as to make 'em degenerate. Thus

Thus we see if Love were what our Adversaries wou'd have it, yet is it as reasonable to be allow'd, as what their Masters hold necessary in *Tragedy*. But this is a Concession I am by no means oblig'd to make; for I am not of Opinion that there is any Necessity that the most tender Scenes of Love, shou'd be void of that Elevation of Thought and Expression, that constitutes *Majesty*. or that they shou'd be deliver'd in that *Sermone pedestri*, *Horace* judges so requisite to the Expression of Grief. This is evident from *Virgil's* Fourth Book, and the *All for Love* of Mr. *Dryden*: Both which abound with noble Thoughts and Language.

But the tender Scenes are the least Advantages Love brings to *Tragedy*. There are a great many beautifull Occasions offer'd to the Poet by it; from the Effects of it; the other Passions concerned in it, of Descriptions; &c. as we may find in all the best of our Plays, particularly in that admirable Piece of the best of Poets, which I mentioned but now, viz. *All for Love*. 'Tis the Love of *Anthony* and *Cleopatra*, that furnishes the Occasion of all the admirable Scenes of that Play: The same is to be said of the Fourth Book of *Virgil's Aeneids*.

To conclude this Point, it must be granted that Love in its Nature, must inspire Noble and more August Thoughts or Sentiments, than *Grief* or *Terror*. For the Soul is more dilated, and exerts its noblest Faculties more in Love, than in *Sorrow* or *Fear*; which both contract the Soul and

its Operations. Love pushes a Generous Mind on to Great Actions, to render it self more agreeable and taking to the Object of his Desires than others. Whereas *Grief* and *Fear* are Opposites to all that's Great and Noble. All the Steps to Love are Great, and much a-kin to that Glory *Rapin* will have the only Object of an Hero's Passion; for *Admiration* is the first Illustrious Step by which a Man mounts to Love: And to acquire Admiration, a Man must perform something extraordinary: For 'tis not the Beauty or Manly Fabrick of the Body, that are suppos'd capable alone of making that Impression on an *Heroine*, (for such must the Mistress of a Hero be) 'tis his Acts that render him Admirable and Charming in her Eye. And indeed, common Experience will convince us, that a Person of Quality that has Signaliz'd himself by any Noble Deeds, shall gain the Fair much easier than a Son of the Earth unknown to Fame, and yet not born to Reputation. Love therefore, being the Spur to Noble Actions, cannot but inspire Noble Thoughts or Sentiments, and Noble Thoughts being agreeable to the Majesty of Tragedy, Love in respect of the Sentiments it inspires, cannot derogate from that Majesty; which is the Second Proof I propos'd in Defence of the Nobleness of this Passion. From whence I shall pass to the Third and Fourth, which have an immediate Dependance on these, and are pretty well cleared, by what I have produc'd toward the latter end of this Second Particular.

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In the next Place, Love is either opposite, or agreeable to the Majesty of Tragedy, by *its Effects*, or *Actions that depend upon it*. If the Noblest Actions, and the most Tragical Events be agreeable to the Majesty of Tragedy, the Effects of Love are. Witness the Performances of the Hero's in some of the best of our Modern Plays; and the *Catastrophe's* of many that depend on the Effects of Love, as that of the inimitable, and so often mention'd *All for Love*, &c. Besides, 'tis already prov'd, that Love provokes to Noble Actions, in the foregoing Paragraph; and Noble Actions are properly dignify'd for Tragedy; therefore the Actions that depend on Love, are not derogatory to the Majesty of Tragedy. Nor do the other Effects of it afford a less Noble Subject for the Poet, the many Passions that depend on them, the Jealousies, the Revenge, the Anger, the Contests of Desire, of Hope and Despair, &c. give unexpressible Beauty to any Poem: There is nothing so fine and moving, as the curious touching of the Passions, for those are the Engines that are to work the Effect of Tragedy, in producing *Terror* and *Compassion*. The Distractions and Distasters of those who are Sacrific'd by Love, are of a more general concern than those that are made miserable by Ambition, or other Villainies. And this brings us to the Last Test that is to try whether Love be such an Enemy to the *Majesty of Tragedy*, viz. *The Influence it has on the Life of Mankind*. And here I believe *Rapin* places the

chief Distinction betwixt *Majesty*, and the *Lightness of Love*. For he supposes the Influence Love has on Mankind, is of that light Nature, that it can produce nothing but soft whining about trifling Kindnesses; whereas *Ambition*, which is a Love of Glory, furnishes the Poet with Incidents as well as Thoughts, that are Noble and Surprizing; which, with the Angustness of expression, compose what he understands by Majesty. But 'tis evident from what has been said, and Experience, that there are as many Noble Actions, as many extraordinary Events, and as many surprizing Thoughts, the Effects of *Love of Woman*, as of the Love of Glory, both which are the Ingredients that *Virgil* and *Homer*, and the other Great Poets of Antiquity compos'd their Hero's of. *Achilles* had his *Briseis*, his *Polixena*, &c. *Pyrrhus* his *Hermione*, *Hercules* his *Omphale*, *Megara*, *Deianira*, &c. *Ajax* his *Telemesse*, *Telamon* his *Hesione*, *Hector* his *Andromache*, *Aeneas* his *Creusa*, *Dido* and *Lavinia*. And none of the Hero's Race wounded the Goddess of Love but *Diomedes*. So Heroical a Passion is the Love of Woman, that I must think it as Majestical, as that of Ambition and Glory. The Love of *Paris* gave *Homer* the Ground of his Poem, viz. the *Trojan War*, founded on the Rape of *Helena*, by her *Trojan* Admirer; which shews that the Influence it has on Mankind, is very great, when it was so powerfull to prevail with the *Trojans* to keep *Helena* for the Love *Paris* bore her, at the Expence of their Peace and

and Safety. And Dr. *Burnet* in his Answer to *Varillas*, observes very truly against that Historian, that Interest or Ambition, are not the only Motives of the Actions of Mankind, there is much to be attributed to the Passions, and of them, none more Violent and Sovereign, than this of Love. Tragedy therefore wou'd not be a perfect Image of Humane Life, if it left so considerable a Share of it untouch'd, as Love Commands or Influences.

Having thus prov'd (as I think at least) that Love does not degrade the Majesty of Tragedy, and that it therefore ought not, for that, to be discarded by our Tragic Poets, I shall now prove by the very end and design of this Poem, that 'tis necessary to be preserv'd by them; and by consequence, that the Possession of the Stage the Moderns have given it, is an Improvement of Tragedy and not a Derogation. The end of Tragedy is, as *Rapin* more than once assures us, *the rectifying the Passions by the Passions themselves, in calming, by their Emotion, the Troubles they wou'd excite in the Heart.* From hence 'tis evident, that unless Love be taken in, the most predominant and violent of Passions, Tragedy cannot perfect its Cure, since it must leave the most considerable Distemper (for so are all the Passions that are not regulated by Reason) without any Remedy. But in his 17th. particular Reflection, where he mentions the end of Tragedy, he seems to contradict himself, when he first says, *Pride and Hardness of*

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Heart;

Heart, were the most important Faults (not most important to be cur'd if not general, by so public a Cure) to be regulated, and yet a little after he tells us, that Man is naturally timorous and compassionate: Now he that is naturally compassionate, can never be accus'd of Hardness of Heart, with any Shew of Reason and Justice. But something must be said to reduce the end of Tragedy to their Notions; whereas 'tis indeed the regulating all the most important Passions and Vices of Mankind, which contribute to the Disturbance of his Peace and Happiness, and obstruct his Progress in Vertue. Now it must be granted that Love, as well as other Passions, when it has past the Boundaries of Reason, becomes destructive to our Happiness and Vertue, and ought therefore as much to be Purg'd as Fear or Pity. In short, if the chief Aim of Tragedy be the moving of *Terror* and *Compassion*, 'tis evident, Love is extremely conducive to that end, and therefore not ill made use of by our Poets.

The next Objection that is made against Love in our Tragedy, is, that it discovers a Weakness of *Genius*. For *Rapin* tells us that it discovers a Weakness of *Genius* not to be able to sustain an Action on the Theatre, with moving *Terror* and *Pity* only. But he here supposes that Love does not contribute to the same end, as I have made evident already. He must be extremely out of Humor with the Moderns, else he wou'd never make this an Objection against



gainst their Strength of Genius, which is an Argument of their Judgment; for they evidently saw by the Performances of the *Gracians*, that Terror and Pity, could not be mov'd always by the barren Repetition of the same Method to it: And it were to be wish'd that *Sophocles* and *Euripides* had been sensible of this, they wou'd then never have fail'd in keeping up the Dignity and Majesty of the Theatre, as they have in some of those few Plays we have of theirs. For we find a great Sterility in some of those Seven Plays of *Sophocles*, as to the Design and End of Tragedy, as well as Noble Thoughts. What *Terror* or *Pity* can *Philoctetes* move, or where are the Great and Noble Thoughts to support it? Where is the Majesty of *Oedipus Coloneus*, which *Rapin* himself grants to be low and degenerate? Nor can I discover the mighty *Pity* and *Terror* that can be mov'd by the bringing in a Madman on the Stage, and a company of dead Sheep about him. I'm sure 'twou'd make an Audience here laugh. Nay, I must declare (nor am I troubl'd at what Use the Critics will make of it) I think his Master-piece out-done by Mr. *Dryden* in his *All for Love*, both in the *Intrigue* and *Discovery*; which are built on an abundantly more probable Foundation, and not one jot less surprizing and fine. Nor will I yield that the Thought and Expression of *Sophocles* at all excell our *English*.

The last Objection *Rapin* conjures up against Love, is, *That it is opposie to the Reformation of the*  
M 4 *Stage.*

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The last Objection *Rapin* conjures up against Love, is, That it is opposite to the Reformation of the Stage.

*Stage.* I can discover no such matter in any or at least in the best of our English Tragedies; and by *Cornell's* Discourse on his *Theodora*, we find the *French* Theatre more Chast than the Pulpit. Nor can I discover any thing in ours that comes short of that Purity that becomes Ladies of the severest Honour to hear: I cannot say that for the Comedy of our Stage, which as to Tragedy I think needs no Reformation.

To pass therefore from the Objections against Love, to the prejudicial Effects, our Plays owe to it; I find them too in Number; 1. That it hinders those admirable Impressions those of the Ancients made on their Audience. 2. That it causes the decay of a Tragedy's Reputation, in a Year or two.

The first he builds on a Fallacy, viz. The wonderful Impressions the *Perseus* and *Andromeda* of *Euripides* had on the *Abderites*. This is not to be attributed to the Excellence either of the Poet or the People, who were so gross to think *Democritus* Mad, when in the most reasonable Employment of his Studies, the Dissection of Animals: Besides, the true cause of this Success of these Poems, is not to be granted to the Excellence of the Poet, but the Distemper the People of that City were infected with at that time, being all Poetically Mad. As a Witness of the truth of this, hear the Account *Calins*, lib. 3. Cap. 4. (as I find it Quoted) gives of it.

*Tis*



'Tis reported, that the Abderites in the time of Lysimachus, were Infected with a new and strange kind of Distemper, the progress of which was in this manner: First of all, an extream violent burning Fever seiz'd them, and rag'd through the whole Town; on the Seventh day, the Blood in great abundance, burst out at their Noses; and some of them were affected with violent Sweatings, after which the Fever ended; but still a very ridiculous Distemper possess'd all their Minds, they all ran Mad after Tragedies, thundring the Iambics about as loud as they could possibly bawl, but what they chiefly Sung, was the *Andromeda* of Euripides, and the Words of Perseus. This strange and uncommon Madness diffus'd it self very far, till the Winter and the severe Cold coming on, put an end to this Evil.

Thus he: — And can there be any thing more unfair, and absurd, than this condemning our Plays, for not making such Impressions on the Audience as the *Andromeda* of Euripides did on the Abderites, who were Distracted with a Fever, that made them Ravish'd with any Poetry; for we find, that it was not the *Andromeda* of Euripides only, but chiefly That they Recited.

But were it true, that these Plays of the Ancients made these wondrous Impressions on People in their Wits, I'm sure it is not our Poets fault, that ours are less Efficacious; the Passions cannot be more finely touch'd than in *All for Love*, and several other Plays of Mr. Dryden, Mr. Otway, &c. We must therefore attribute it to another

another Cause. The Audience, at least the Major part of it, was compos'd of People not acquainted with the dismal *Catastrophe's* of Princes, which History now so abundantly furnishes us with, and so the uncommon Miseries of Princes on their Stage, influenc'd them; as I have seen a Ballad of some Tragical Story, without any Poetry in it, draw Tears from some of the Female Mobb, and make the Male shake their Heads, and go very sorrowfully away. But our Audience that is generally compos'd of the better sort, are not so easily mov'd with these Events, they being made familiar to 'em by History and Observation; with these the nice touching of the Passions chiefly move; and I my self, dull as I am, have often experienced those effects in me, for which the Critics boast so much of the power of the Ancient Poets.

The other Effect is Ridiculous, *viz.* That it causes the decay of a Tragedy's Reputation in a Year or two. I know not indeed how far this may hold good against the *French* Poets; but I'm very sure 'tis evidently false as to our Plays. Witness all Mr. *Drydens*; the *Orphan*, and *Venice Preserv'd*, of Mr. *Otway*; *Alexander* and Others, of Mr. *Lee's*; which are still in Esteem, after several Years, and e'ry day encreasing their Reputation.

Finally, Since the Motives that are urg'd as the cause of this Innovation, are either falsely pretended, or sufficient to justify it; since the Objections are invalid, and the Effects not so  
Defective

Defective as our Adversaries wou'd have them :  
We must conclude, that Love is an Improvement of the Old *Dramma*, and ought therefore to be Continu'd..

I desire you'll excuse the length of my Letter, and hereafter confirm what my Arguments have aim'd at, both by your Practice and better of your own; since you have both more leisure and better Penetration and Judgment, to secure so Noble a Cause against the frigid Opposers of it. Woman is a glorious part of the Creation, therefore I wou'd willingly see the Love of them Establish'd on as Noble a Foundation, as the Love of Glory, in the opinions of Men, which in Reality is so far more Excellent and Happy. 'Tis a Cause indeed, that deserves a greater Champion than my self; and, I hope, 'twill find one in you.

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*To my Honour'd, Ingenious and Learned Friend, Dr. Wiggely, about*  
S L E E P and its Medicinal Property.

**A**LL your good Nature, your readiness to serve your Friend, as my self have experienc'd; your Learning, Ingenuity, and the other Qualities that justly render you dear to all that know you,

you, will not atone for one great Fault you are guilty of. That fault indeed is an excess of an uncommon Vertue ; yet since an enemy to your own Good, it must be condemn'd by those that love you : Your *Modesty* I mean ; for by this you keep your self too much Unknown. This hinders you from pushing forward in the World, whilst Men of abundantly less Parts, both Acquir'd and Natural, Shoulder one another for Preheminence. Your Modesty, Doctor, does an Injury to the Public, as well as to your self, in robbing both of the Advantages to be deriv'd to and from each other.

My self not long ago, plaid the Physician with Success, tho I am yet to seek in the cause of it : One complaining of some approaches of an Ague, and Feverish Symptoms, I gave him something that could have none or very little influence in his Cure ; a little Chalk scrap'd very fine to take in a Glass of Ale, and bid him Sleep after it, and this perfected the Cure. I am apt to believe the Sleep that he got, ( for he slept hartily all that Night and part of the next Morning ) was the chief Remedy ; the grounds of my Opinion I'll here give you.

*Sleep, according to Galen, is nothing else but the Quiet or Rest of the Animal Faculties. This Definition is taken from the Effects. Aristotle terms it, the Impotence of the Senses, with a great deal of Reason, which his Interpreters rightly observe, is not a destruction and loss of the Senses, but a difficult and clog'd Sense : For, a Man that*



that is a Sleep, is not without his Senses, tho they are with some difficulty affected : The defect of Perception in the Senses of a sleeping Man, is attributed to their Impotence and the force of Sleep, by which all the Senses and Animal Actions are lock'd or bound up. But *Galen* in the above quoted Definition, does justly term Sleep, the Rest or Repose of the Animal Actions, because both the *Vital*, as the *Pulses* and the *Breathing*, and the *Natural Actions*, as the *Concoction of the Ventricle*, which are very well continu'd in Sleep, do not Cease, but are then more justly perform'd. As for Example, The motion or beating of the Heart is thought to be stronger Sleeping than Waking.

But as for the *Matter of Sleep*, I find it thus in a Modern Author Defin'd, *Somnus est vapor quidam benignus Sanguinis, Spiritus, & humidioris Arteriae, qui per venas jugulares, & per arterias carotidas fertur ad cerebrum & sensum communem vincit.* Sleep is a certain friendly Vapour of the Blood, the Spirit, and the more humid Artery, which is convey'd by the jugular Veins and Carotid Arteries to the Brain, and make the Sensum communem. This must be confess'd to be some description or account of Sleep. There are therefore three requisites to a gentle and composed Sleep ; a temperate Brain, a friendly Moisture, and a quiet Mind ; for many tho' they sleep in all appearance, yet are disturb'd in their Minds, as is evident from the Example of *Dido*, when in Love with *Aeneas*.

*Phœnissa*

————— *Phœnissa nec unquam*  
*Solvitur in somnos oculis, nec pectore Noctem*  
*Accipit.* —————

But she was quite Restless, and without Sleep.

As to the efficient Cause of Sleep, I think it the *Brain*, which is the first Sensory, tho *Aristotle* makes the Heart so. Whence I believe, proceeded our common Saying when we are very much disposed to Sleep, that *our Heart's a Sleep*. 'Tis therefore the Refrigeration or Cooling of the Brain that causes Sleep, as the Calefaction, or Warming of this first Sensific, is the cause of our Awakening, and keeping Awake. The former Author tells us — *Somnus fit cum sese (quamvis non quiescat) relaxat primum Sensificum, quo Spiritus animales redintegrentur. Hoc autem evenit à blandioribus vaporibus sublatis Sanguine ac suavi pituita in cerebrum: Quibus refrigeratis, & in roscidum madorem coactis, nervorum meatus oblinuntur & quasi obligantur.*

The chief end therefore of Sleep is, the restoring of the animal Spirits; and that the Actions of the whole Animal acquire new Strength, and begin afresh: As 'tis in *Ovid*.

*Quod caret alterna requie, durable non est*  
*Hoc reparat vires, fessaq; membra levat.*

But

But besides this primary and chief end or effect of Sleep, there are others, as that the *Cotion* of the *Ventricle* may be the better effected, and the Distempers and their Symptoms mitigated: For Sleep better concocts our Nourishment, mitigates the Matter of Distempers, and lessens all Symptoms. This is the reason that Children are often Cur'd of very great Sickneses by Sleep alone.

But not to enter into a Discourse I'm so very ill qualifi'd for as this, I'll pass to a more pleasant and easie Task; I mean, the Religious use the Ancients made of Sleep, and the manner of Curing Distempers of the Priests of *Æsculapius* or *Priapus*, heretofore; to whom whilst they slept in their Chappels, those Medicinal Gods, disclos'd their Remedies for the Distemper'd that sought their help, and Advice to those who sought their Counsel. Thus *Quartilla* in *Petronius Arbiter* tells *Encolpius* and *Ascylos*, that she had sought Help of the God *Priapus* in her Sleep, for her Ague, and *Encolpius* Comforts her in these words a little after, when she desir'd they shou'd not divulge the Secrets of the Rites of *Priapus*, which they had seen: *Nam neq; (says he) sacra quenguam evulgaturum, & si quod praterca aliud Remedium ad Tertianam Deus illi monstrasset, adjuturos nos Divinam providentiam, vel periculo nostro.* That none of 'em wou'd divulge the Rites of her God, but on the contrary, wou'd at the expence of their own hazard endeavour to assist his divine Providence, if he shou'd reveal

veal any other Remedy for the cure of her Ague. And Suetonius in the Life of *Vespasian*, says, *Orantes opem valitudine demonstratam a Serapide per quietem restitutum oculos, si inspisset.* This was a common thing in Antiquity to take the *Responſa*, or Answers of the Gods by Dreams, for *Ille incubat Jovi*, signifies, He sleeps in the *Capitol*, to receive the Oracles or Answers of that God. Thus the Sick us'd to sleep in the Temple of *Æsculapius*, to receive Remedies in their Sleep from him. There was a famous and celebrated Temple of *Æsculapius* in *Epidaurus*, to which the Sick us'd to go on Pilgrimage from several Places. Extraordinary Examples of this kind of Cures one of your Profession ( which has yielded the World abundance of Learned, Ingenious and Witty Men ) produces the first Chap. and first Book *De arte Gymnastica* ; I mean, *Hieron. Mercurialis*. He will have it that *Hippocrates* form'd his Body of Medicine from these Nocturnal Revelations of the Gods; that is from the Tables that were hung up in the Temples, with an account of them. *An totam* ( says he ) *Medicina partem, qua ad sanos & victus rationem pertinet, ex tabellulis, aliisq; donariis Æsculapii Templo dicatis Hippocrates conflaverit? An. vero totam in curandis Morbis versantem Clinecema vocatam, quemadmodum Varro, Strabo, atq; Plinius, credidisse videntur, mihi plane compertum non est: Nisi quod fuit mos liberatos Morbis in Templo ejus Dei, quod auxiliatum esset scriberet. Isq; imprimis illis temporibus usq; ad Antonini Imperatoris ætatem,*



tem, non modo in Græcia, verum etiam in Italia perduravit. Uti præ cæteris, ex Tabella Marmorea Romæ in Æsculapii Templo in Insula Tiberina inventa, & usq; in hunc diem apud Maphæos conservata, intelligere licet, in qua Græce hæc leguntur. I am not certain (says he) whether Hippocrates Compos'd all that part of the Medicina! Art, which relates to the ordering of both Health and Diet, out of the little Consecrated Tablets and other Gifts in the Temple of Æsculapius, or only that part of the Curing of Distempers which is nominated Clinick, as Varro, Strabo and Pliny seem to have thought: But that 'twas a Custom for the Sick to write in the Temple of that God the Remedy that had Cur'd them; which Custom continued to the time of Antoninus, not only in Greece, but also in Italy, as we may above all others understand from the Marble Table found in the Templet of Æsculapius in Rome, in the Tiberine Island, and preserv'd till this day by the Maphæi, in which this that follows is in Greek.

I.

Αὐτῶς τῶς ἡμῖνας, ὅς.

In these days he gave an Oracle to one Claudius that was Blind, that he should come to the Sacred Altar, and kneel down; and then come from the Right side to the Left, and put five Fingers on the Altar, and lift up his Hand and put it on his own Eyes: And he saw perfectly in the Presence of the People,

N

People, who Congratulated him, and Rejoic'd, that such great Miracles were perform'd under our Emperor Antoninus.

*Αουκίω πρὸς τὸν Θεόν, καὶ ὁ Θεός.*

The God gave an Oracle to Lucius, that had a Pain in his Side, and was despair'd of by all Men, that he should come and take Apples from the Altar, and mix them with Wine, and put them on his Side; upon which he Recovered, and returned his Thanks to the God, and the People Congratulated him.

*Αὐτὸς ἀναπετόν, Ἰνδία, &c.*

Julianus vomiting Blood, being despair'd of by all Men, received an Oracle from the God, that he should come and take off from the Altar Pine-Apples, and eat them for three days with Honey, and he Recovered, and publicly in the Presence of the People gave Thanks.

*Οὐαρεσίω Ἀγέω, σπῆλαι, Ἰνδία, &c.*

The God gave an Oracle to Valerius Aper, a Roman Soldier, That he should come and take the Blood of

of a White Cock, and mixing it with Honey, compose a Medicine for his Eyes, and wear it for three days on them; and he saw, and came and Publickly return'd Thanks to the God.

And I guess ( continues *Mercurialis* ) by these Verses of *Tibullus*, that the same us'd to be done in the Temple of *Isis*.

*Nunc dea, nunc succurre mihi jam posse mederi,  
Picta docet Templis multa Tabella tuis.*

You may find more of this kind in *Joseph Scaliger*, in his *Indicibus Inscriptionum antiquarum, a Grutero Collectarum*. And indeed this seems to be something of the Practice of the Jews, to take Divine Oracles as they slept in the Temple: For thus I find it in the 3<sup>d</sup>. Chapter of the First Book of *Samuel*, ver. 3. *Samuel slept in the Temple of the Lord, where the Ark of God was.* 4. *Then the Lord call'd Samuel, and he answered and said, Here I am.* We may gather from *Geor. Fabricius*, that this Custom of sleeping in Temples or Churches, is still continued in *Italy*; for he says he observ'd at *Padua*, young Country Fellows and Lasses, to lie in the Church of *St. Anthony* on a certain Night.

And now I think 'tis time to Wake, having rambl'd as if in a Dream, from one thing to another; from my just Acknowledgments, to my Emperic Exploit; from thence to the Medicinal

( 180 )

nal Power of Sleep, and thence to its Religious  
Use: So that if I wou'd not have you Sleep too  
in spite of the Variety, I must conclude here as  
always, that I am,

S I R,

*Your extremely Obliged*

*Friend and Humble Servant,*

Char. Gildon.

---

TO LUCINDA.

May the 10.

I Received your's this Morning, which has put  
me so much out of Humour, that it ought to  
be no wonder if I write in a Stile different from  
my former. I told you in mine, the Judgment  
of the Men of Sense, of your Beloved *Athenians*.  
I have the Honour to know some of the greatest  
Wits, and best Judges of Sense and Learning;  
who unanimously agree in as contemptible an  
Opinion of them, as they express of their Ad-  
versaries at all Times.

But



But after all, Madam, I shall be very little concern'd if you put the worst Construction you can upon my Demeanour in this Business, since 'tis pardonable in me, who, you know own'd my self for a little necessary Dissimulation; till you made me a Convert to universal Sincerity, which I'll always preserve for the future. But I never pretended my Life exempt from Faults or Follies — No, on the contrary, I confess I have been more guilty of both, than most; and among that Number, I reckon this and some other foolish Trifles that shall be Nameless: But I design to set a stricter Guard on my Words and Actions for the future, and not let any Bye Respect betray me to say or do any thing I may repent of without the Power of retrieving. This Change I partly owe to some Inconveniences I have drawn on my self by Inconsideration; tho I own to you, even now, that I chiefly owe it to your well-acted Sincerity. You drew I confess, Madam, the aimable Picture of a fine Woman ( I wrong the Noble Idea you gave me of your self, by giving it the Title of Woman ) And oh! that the Lovely Piece had charm'd your Heart as it did mine; it won me so entirely, that I hope I shall never act contrary any more to the divine Vertue of Sincerity; from which, Madam, I must tell you, with a great deal of Distraction, that you extreemly deviate, who could in your last assure me, that you made no Enquiry about me, when to my certain Knowledge, you could not

know me to be the Author of that Book but by a very nice Enquiry. Woman indeed, was so well known to me, that 'twas my Fault to be so monstrously impos'd on, as to believe there could be any one of the Sex qualified with a Vertue so opposite to a Woman's Nature as Sincerity. That indeed, was the golden Work, the Chymistry of my Conversation has been so long in Chase of; and oh! you made me fondly believe I'd found the mighty Treasure in you because you glitter'd: But alas! the golden Fantom vanish'd like those deluding Hopes, and I find a Woman of Wit and Sense exalted with Sincerity, is as meer a Fancy as the Philosopher's Stone. That was the Beauty that chain'd my Soul to *Mirilla*, and made me value her above all Sublunary Goods; that made me sigh for the Enjoyment of her Conversation; but now the gay Vision's past, and you have wak'd me to find you a very, very Woman.

I have been too tedious on this Paragraph of your Letter to give a precise Answer to the rest, I shall reserve that till another Time, and only now tell you, *First*, that you do me but Justice to think no worse of me for the Declaration of a Truth, you desired to know, with all the Sincerity in Nature; for Madam, I must always own 'twas such a Veneration I had for you, that I cou'd not but be free and sincere with you. *Next*, That Liberty like Religion is a Word of a double Meaning, and equally pernicious to Human Kind. Mistake me not, Madam,  
 I mean

I mean as to the villainous Use that has always been made of both ; not as to true and real Religion and Liberty, which I'm for as much as any, and am so good a Patriot, that I'd rather be tortur'd an Age for the least good of my Country, than do the least Action against the real Interest of it. *Lastly*, That tho' it wou'd yet be extreamly grateful to be admitted to your Conversation, yet since you obstinately persist to have it so, I must submit to your Conditions, but I desire you wou'd put me to as little Expence of Patience as you can, because I still earnestly desire to obtain what I have with such Ardor requested, that is, the Conversation of *Mirtilla*, in Hopes to make you by my real Sincerity my Convert, as your pretended Sincerity made me your's ; which wou'd be an extraordinary Happiness to

*Madam,*

*Your Humble Servant,*

*and Sincere Friend,*

*Lycidas*

*the rising the Pyrene*

*A Short View of Old Rome, in a  
Letter to URANIA.*

**N**Ever wonder at *Ovid's* Trouble for being Banish'd from *Old Rome*, since we find that *St. Augustine* made it One of his Three Wishes, to have seen it in all its Glory; as it was when *Ovid* liv'd. I'll give you but an imperfect View of it, as I can collect it from *Pliny*, and you'll confess it raises in you a most Magnificent Idea; what must then the Noble Remains that were in *St. Austin's* Time give him?

I will begin with the *Grand Circo* built by *Julius Caesar*, a Work not of Ages, but of a few Years (for he Reign'd but five, reckoning from his first coming to *Rome* after his passing the *Rubicon*.) It was Three Furlongs in Length, and one in Breadth; surrounded with Magnificent Buildings, able to contain two Hundred and sixty Thousand Spectators. The Palace of *Paulus*, all adorned with *Phrygian* Columns. The Temple of Peace built by *Vespasian* with all the Beauty, Art, and Expence could bestow. The *Pantheon* built by *Agrippa*, to *Jove the Avenger*, when *Valerius Ostiensis* a famous Architect, had covered that Theatre in which *Libo* exhibited Shews and Plays to the People of *Rome*. Can we admire the Expences of the barbarous Kings, in the raising the *Pyramids*, when the very Ground  
for



for the Building the *Forum* cost *Cæsar* the Dictator in those Days, above Ten Thousand Sestertii; and if the Expence and dearness of things be of any Force. *Publius Clodius* who was killed by *Milo*, lived in a House that cost 1484 Sestertii, which seems to me to fall but little short of the Extragance of Kings in their Palaces; but in those Days the *Romans* were Admirers of any great Works however less beautiful, as the Vastness of the Ramparts of the *Capitol*, with its prodigious Foundations. I cannot omit the very subterranean Magnificence of this City, even in the wondrous Conveyances of the Common-Shoars, so Spacious, that one might have Sail'd under a Pendulous City, through Rocks, which have been Penetrated to let in seven Civulers, which flow'd in with a rapid Course like a Torrent, to carry away all before them; which being increas'd and agitated by the Rains from above, beat and dash'd against the sides with great Vehemency; Sometimes the River *Tyber* ran back into these Channels; where tho' the several Streams at their meeting fought and made a great deal of do, yet the firmness of the Pile and Buildings, resisted its unruly Force. These admirable Arches out braved Ages, Earthquakes and Ruins, from the time of *Tarquinus Priscus*, to the Destruction of *Rome*; for that King it was that Built them; who when he undertook to perform a Work of that difficulty both for Length and Danger, by the Hands of the *Roman* People, put to Death all those

those that fled from the Fatigue of the Undertaking; for the pursuance and perfecting of which, he made use of a Remedy unheard of before or after; which was, That all the Bodies of the Citizens that were executed on this account, shou'd some be fix'd on Crosses and expos'd to the view of the People, and others in their Presence given for Food to the Wild Beasts and Ravenous Birds; which produc'd this effect, that they that beheld 'em, struck with a shame to be daunted at any Undertaking, with a bold Zeal for the Honour of the *Roman* Name, which had often preserv'd them at the lowest ebb of Fortune in Battles, push'd on the Work with all the fervour imaginable; which the King observing, took hold of the opportunity to enlarge his Impositions upon them, making them extend those Subterranean Passages to that bigness and height, that a Cart very much loaden with Hay might easily pass through them. But all I have already said, is inconsiderable, if we compare it to one Miracle, which is this, When *Marcus Lepidus* and *Quintus Caelus* were *Consuls*, there was no Nobler Structure in *Rome* than the House of *Lepidus* himself; but within Thirty five Years after, that was not the hundredth part as big as innumerable Palaces that were then Raz'd. *Marcus Sennarius*, when he was *Edile*, with his private Wealth and Abilities perform'd a Work beyond all that ever was made by any before, design'd not for time, but Eternity; and this was a Theatre, in which were a tripple order of Scenes

to

to the height of Three hundred and sixty Columns, the lower part was of Marble, the middle of Glass ( strange kind of Luxury ! ) and the uppermost were adorn'd with Golden Tablets, the Brass Statues betwixt these Pillars, were in in number Three thousand ; and the Pitt it self was capable of holding Fourscore thousand Spectators. To this I may add a greater Prodigy, effected by *Caius Curio*, who follow'd the part of *Julius Caesar* in the Civil War ; for when at the Funeral of his Father he saw he cou'd not surpass *Scæurus* in Pomp, Wealth, Beauty, and Nobleness of the Structure, Magnificence of the Furniture and Decorations, resolv'd to out-do him in Ingenuity : Therefore he caus'd two most spacious Theatres of Wood to be made near to one another, and hung them on a Versatile Balance or Hinge ; so in the Morning when the Plays were perform'd, they were Back to Back, (as I may say) but in the Evening after all the People were in them, they were whirl'd about on their Hinges, the Scenes of both descending as they met together, and Compos'd in a Moment an Amphitheatre, in which immediately were presented the Fights of the *Gladiators*. What can we most admire in this, the Invention, or the Inventor ? The Artificer, or Designer ? Him that durst imagin such a bold Effort, or him that could reduce it to Practice ? But that which seems most strange to me, is, that the People should be so mad to venture themselves in so ticklish and uncertain a Seat. Behold, (says *Pliny*)

*This*

This is that People that have Subjugated the whole Earth, which has stiff'd Kingdoms and Nations, and gives Laws to far Countries, a certain Part and Portion of the Immortal Gods, compared to the rest of Mankind: Behold them I say, swinging in a ponderous Machine, and clapping and loudly applauding to their own Danger. Behold all the Roman People aboard two Vessels as it were, which were only separated from Destruction by two Hinges that supported them, gazing at the Combates of the Gladiators, with Pleasure, tho they were so near Perishing themselves if the Machine fail'd. What might not he have perswaded the Roman People to, who cou'd so easily prevail with them to venture into a hanging Theatre, as if he intended to Sacrifice the whole Nation, at the Funerals of his Father, or at least bid fair for it. Had *Caligula* prepared such an Engine, he need not have been at the expence of so fruitless a Wish, as that all the *Romans* had but one Neck, that at one Blow he might Dispatch 'em. But after the Hinges were so worn by Use that they wou'd no longer turn, he vary'd it and left it in the form of an *Amphisheatre*. After this, what need I tell you of the Golden Palaces of *Nero* and *Caius*, or the Aquaducts of the King *Quintus Martius*, or those Additions which *Agrippa* made to them when he was *Edile*, who besides the Reparations of the Old, made Seven Hundred Lakes, and an Hundred and Five Fountains. Built a Hundred and Thirty Magnificent Hostels, and Adorn'd these Buildings with Three Hundred Statues of Brass and Marble, and



and Four Hundred Marble Pillars, and all this in the space of One Year. And for the eternal Fame of his *Ædileship*, he gave Shews to the People for near Threescore Days, besides an Hundred and Seventy *Bagnio's*, as a free Gift; which Places were afterward increased in *Rome*, to an infinite Number. But the *Aqueducts* that were begun by *Julius Cesar*, and finish'd by *Claudius*, far surpass'd the former. But if we shou'd nearly consider the abundance of Water that was us'd in public, in Baths, Fish-Ponds, Houses, Conduits and Gardens, in the Suburbs, and *Villa's* as well as City, the Arches that were built to convey it, the Mountains that were cut through, the Valleys that were level'd, we must grant that there cou'd be nothing more Admirable in the whole World. Next let me pass to the Rareties of Art, as the Statues and Obelisc's which were brought to *Rome* from abroad: First the *Thebane* Obelisc was made and erected by the Labour of Twenty Thousand Men: The King himself when it was set up, fearing that the *Machines* wou'd not be of sufficient Strength to support the vastness of the Weight, without an extraordinary Caution of the Workmen, to make them take the more care in erecting it, caus'd his Son to be fastn'd to the very top of it, that their Endeavours for his Safety, shou'd conduce to the happy placing the Stone. The Prodigious Wonders of this Work made *Cambyses* when he took this City of *Thebes*, and came almost to the Pedestal of this Obelisc with Fire and Sword,

to

to command the Flames to be extinguish'd, he being struck with Astonishment at so awfull a Pile, who had no Compassion for the City its self. In *Alexandria*, *Ptolomeus Philadelphus* set up one of Eighty Cubits, which King *Nectabis* had caus'd to be hewn out of a Rock; but it prov'd much a greater Difficulty to carry it to its Place and erect it. Some say 'twas carried a Ship-board by the Famous Architect *Satyrus*. Others, that a Channel was cut from beyond the place where the Obelisc lay, under it, to the River *Nilus*; and then Two very broad Vessels joyn'd together, and so deeply laden, that they might when they came up the Channel, go under the Obelisc, ( it reaching like a Bridge, from one side of this *Cut* to the other ) And being come exactly under it, they unloading them, by degrees the Vessels rose out of the Water, and so lifted up the Obelisc from the Ground, and thus bore it down into the *Nile*. Out of this same Mountain there is a Tradition, that Six were cut of the same Magnitude, and that the Master Work-man had Fifty Talents given him for a Reward. But this Obelisc was set up in *Arifnoe* by the forementioned King, in Honour of his Wife *Arifnoe*, who was also his Sister; and from thence *Maximus* when he was Prefect in *Egypt*, Transported it, tho such a vast and unwieldy Cargo for a Ship; and plac'd it in the *Edman*, having cut off the Top of it, designing to put one of Gold in its Room, which afterwards notwithstanding he neglected. There are Two

more at *Alexandria*, in the Portico's of the Temple of *Caesar* Forty Two Cubits high, which King *Mesphes* made. The chief Difficulty was to Transport them cross the Sea to *Rome*, in Ships of the First Rate. Nor must I omit that Obelise which was plac'd in the *Grand Circo* by *Augustus*, which was made by King *Semnesereai*, in whose Reign *Pythagoras* was in *Egypt*: It was One Hundred Twenty Five Foot, and Three Quarters high, besides the Basis of the same Stone. But that which was in the Field of *Mars*, was made by *Sesostris*: Both contain Inscriptions of the *Egyptians* Interpretations of Natural things, by their Philosophy. This last *Augustus* apply'd to a wonderfull Use, turning it to the Gnome of a Dial, receiving the Shadow of the Sun, and by it distinguish'd the Length of the Days, Nights and Hours, on the Pavement, which he had made to the Proportion of the Obelise, and divided with Lines and Marks of inlaid Brass, on which the Shadow decreas'd and increas'd by degrees, and so artificially denoted the Motions of time. A thing says *Pliny*, in my Opinion, worthy the Knowledge of Posterity. There was another Obelise in the *Vatican Circo* of *Caius* and *Nero*. And this alone amongst them all, was broken in the making. The Son of *Sesostris* made this, as well as another of an Hundred Cubits in height, and Consecrated to the Sun by the Order of the Oracle for the Restoration of his Sight, after he had been Blind. There was a Statue of *Hercules* in the

Beast-

Beast-Market, which was for nothing so remarkable, as its Antiquity and Title; for 'tis said to be Consecrated by *Evander* to him: And it obtain'd the Name of Triumphal, from being Habited in Triumphal Garments, as often as there is any Triumph. The Statue of *Jannis* with his Double Face, must not be forgot, consecrated to him by King *Numa*, which was Ador'd and Sacrific'd to, both for War and Peace; his Fingers being so contriv'd, that they denoted in Three Hundred Sixty Five Days the Year and Age. *Mummius* having Conquer'd *Achaia*, replenish'd the City with Statues: The *Luculli* too, brought not a few into it. Before the Burning of the *Capitol* by the Faction of *Vitellius*, there was in the Fane of *Juno*, a Dog carv'd in Brass licking of his Wounds, which was of such a noble Boldness, that the Value of it was beyond Purchase; and therefore Consecrated to the Goddess. In the *Capitol* was a Statue of *Apollo*, of that prodigious Height, that it was called a *Colossus*; and this was brought from *Apollonia*, a City in *Pontus*, by *Marcus Lucullus*: It was Thirty Cubits high, and cost One Hundred and Twenty Talents. Like this is that *Colossus* of *Jupiter*, Consecrated by *Claudius Caesar*. Besides, these in *Rome*, were an Hundred other *Colossuses* of a lesser Magnitude.

To say nothing of the admirable Pictures that *Pliny* mentions, all far beyond *Raphael*, *Angelo*, *Titian*, and our Modern Artists, we may in short, Reflect, That *Rome* must indeed be a  
 Divine



Divine Sight, whence all the Noblest pieces of Art that the Conquer'd World afforded, were Transported by the Conquerors to *Rome*, to contribute to its Majesty and Glory. Add to this the Politeness of the People *Ovid* left, and the Brutality of those he went to; and we may well cease to admire at his Impatience, and Flattery of his Persecutor *Augustus*, for a Return. But you may see a more perfect Draught of this City in *Fabrizius* his Collation of Old and New *Rome*, I am,

*Madam,*

*Your Friend and Humble Servant,*

*Viridomar.*

*To the Charming and Ingenious*  
**URANIA.**

I'll no more accuse my Fortune, *Urania*, since she has given me so generous an Antidote against all her Venomous Influence, as your *Friendship*, that furnishes me with a very *satisfactory* Retreat from all the violent Onsets of my ill Stars, where I can unload my Soul, and communicate all my Complaints. If I meet with *Villainies* and *Ingratitude*,

*trude*, the common Offspring of *Trust* and *generous Offices*; I'm sensibly pleas'd, that I can with assurance of Pity, tell my Charming Friend my Pain. This is the occasion of this Letter; for, tho I have no *Vilany* to complain of at this time, having had no *Trust* Betray'd; nor any *Ingratitude* to Resent, because I have not been in a Capacity of Obliging the Person I address'd to; yet have I still abundant reason to Sigh for the continual *ill Luck* that attends my Endeavours.

I know *Urania*, you have often told me, that 'tis a very false Measure to judge of others by my own Inclinations; and your Advice, I must grant, carries a great deal of Reason; for whether my Inclinations are just or unjust, I'm ten to one in the wrong, when I judge of another by them; since Mankind differ not only in their Sentiments of the *same thing*, by the different Apprehensions each Man Naturally has; but the very Circumstances and state of our *Affairs*, give a various turn to our *Sentiments*; so that we differ not only from one another, but even from our *Selves*, as our *Fortune* alters our *Condition*. But when I was mistaken in *Pollio*, I follow'd a more common and receiv'd tho not less fallacious Guide, than the former, that is, *Report*. *Pollio* has the Reputation of a *Generous Man*, and may be so perhaps to others; but I'm sure he does not distinguish betwixt those who are and are not fit Objects for his *Generosity*. A pleasant Companion diverts and seasons our Hours of Conversation, and permits not our Judgment to weigh the Merits

fits, of the Person that affords us so agreeable an Entertainment. And this perhaps has misled *Pollio*, who has met with Ingratitude enough from some of that Character, whom he has highly Oblig'd; for perhaps, even I could almost grant were not unpleasant, if not witty Company. But Alas! one of *Pollio's* Experience shou'd know, that Men of that Faculty, have seldom any just Notion of things, at least of *Virtue* and *Honour*: They are their own Gods, and Sacrifice all to themselves; their very loosest and gayest Hours, that one wou'd think free from Design, are like the Miser's Presents to a young heir Apparent, only to draw some Advantage to themselves in *Vanity* or *Interest*. And I must say, I never knew one of these *Witty* Companions that ever abounded much with *Sincerity*. Not that I wou'd extend this Observation beyond all Exceptions: But I'm sure Prudence shou'd chuse where there's less probability of Deceit. On the contrary I have courted his *Friendship* as well as *Generosity*; That with a real Desire, and *This* on no very great Matter, but have scarce met with a Return answerable to my Expectation. In short, *Urania*, twou'd be tedious to tell you all my thoughts of *Pollio* now; what they were when I wrote the following Verses, these will let you see; the effect they had, I shall conclude this Letter with.

To POLLIO.

## The COMPLAINT.

I.

**T**Is now dead Night, and hush'd is e'ery thing;  
 The busie Cit, and the laborious Clown;  
 The cringing Parasite, and haughty Gown;  
 The Plotting Statesman too,  
 And with his Gilded Cares the King,  
 Are all at sweet Repose.

What when awake they all refuse;  
 And Sleep, Death's Image, seem'd as Death will do,  
 To've equall'd the poor Cottage and the Crown,  
 No Wretch but me so much Unblest  
 As not to be at Rest;  
 Of Hope forsaken, and by Fate Opprest;  
 Despair with all its wild Anxieties,  
 Drives Quiet from my Mind, and Slumbers from  
 (my Eyes,

II.

Why do I Live? Why hug my boundless Woe,  
 When Friendly Death sets wide the Gate,  
 That leads to a more happy State?

For not at all to be,

Is better than the ills of Life to know,

When Priestly Barbarism does reign

Almost in e'ry Heart;

And



And scarce one good *Samaritan* is found,  
 That with one *folded Ragg* will part,  
 To cloath the *shuddring* Wretch, or bind his *gaping*  
 Why footh I then my present Pain, (Wound.  
 With the *faint* Shadow of a *fansy'd* Ease,  
 Rather than Cure the Disease,  
 With *Balmy Death*, its sure and lasting Remedy?

## III.

When th' ills of Life too great and num'rous grow,  
 They are the *Summoners* of *Fate*:  
 And 'tis too foolish a Debate  
 ( Punish'd by present Pain )  
 To argue if we shou'd Obey or no.  
 In tort'ring Dreams I've often found  
 My self with threatening Dangers compass'd round;  
 O'er Hills I flie, o'er Vales, o'er Shades in vain,  
 The *fansy'd* Terror meets me when I light,  
 Or close behind  
 Pursues my *Imaginary* Flight:  
 But when my *Lab'ring* Mind  
 From near *Destruction*, can no Refuge find,  
 I Wake, and all the *racking* Scene withdraws,  
 The Horrors past, are lost in present Joys.

## IV.

So in the *gloomy* Dream of Life, I see  
 My tatter'd Bark in *Fortune's* *boist'rous* Sea.  
 To e'ry Wind in vain I shift my Sall,  
*Sinister Fate* allows no *Prosperous* :

In *vain* I strive to reach the *distant* Shoar,  
 For *all* around the angry Billows roar,  
 And on each side encrease th' *unequal* War.  
 Ten thousand Waves, each big with *certain* Fate,  
 On one poor sinking Bark with fury Beat :  
 My Sails are useless, and my Rudder lost ;  
 By clashing Surges to and fro I'm tost ;  
 Within no help ; no Succour from without,  
 Despair and Ruin hem me round about.  
 Approach then **Death**, this *racking* Scene destroy ;  
~~Ah !~~ Wake this Tempest-beaten wretch to long-  
 (sought **Calms** and Joy.

Canto V.

( Night !  
 Ha ! what bright Dawn thus breaks this dismal  
 What *Welcome* Beams their *friendly* force unite,  
 To raise my drooping Soul with their *auspicious*  
 (Light !

Behold the golden Glory spreads apace,  
 The Heavens assume a calmer Face,  
 And all the loud tumultuous Billows cease !  
 The threatening Storm is Over-blown,  
 The scatter'd Clouds now disappear,  
 And the grim Terrors of Despair  
 Are all dispers'd and gone.

Whence, Ah ! whence these Rays Divine,  
 That with so *strong*, so *kind* a Lustre Shine ?

Canto VI.

Lo ! now the Heavenly Cause draws near ;  
 See, see the mighty Goddess **Hope** appear !  
 Her fluid Robes, which *subtle* Threads compose

(From

( From the thin Brains of fond Projectors Spun )

Her naked Beauties to the Eye disclose;  
 Beauties far brighter than the Mid-day Sun;  
 Fairer than Fancy e'er drew Woman-kind,  
 Tho' the vain fancy of a Love-sick Mind.

Her spacious Front, and her inviting Eye,  
 Are fill'd with humble Majesty.

False Joys around her smiling Visage Play,  
 To sooth depending Wretches Pain,

In sight of damn'd Delay  
 And its long Melancholy Train.

Her Head with Laurel, and with Myrtle's Crown'd;  
 With her left Hand where e'er she goes

She thinly strows  
 The Warriour's and the Lover's Wreaths;

But Courtiers flar'ring Promises,  
 With liberal Hand she scatters all around.

# VII.

Her right Hand boundless Stores does hold  
 Of Liberty, of Happiness, and Gold,

Which tho' she seem to promise e'ry one  
 That waits about her Visionary Throne,

Yet fast she grasps the wish'd for Treasure,  
 And does in scanty Portions Measure,

To Few, and Late, the tardy Pleasure.

A Thousand curling Clouds she sits upon,  
 Of Colour various, and of Matter rare,

( As Acme Beauteous, subtle as the Air;  
 Soft as the Downy Bosom of that Charming Fair.)

ExhaPd from the wanton Wishes of Mankind,  
 And all the Numerous Vanities of his sickly Mind.

*Avarice, Ambition, Love, untrussed Bliss,*  
 With all the gaudy Train of fond Desire,  
 The Bigots' future Joy, and States-Man's coming  
 That set the foolish World on Fire, (Happiness,  
 The Pompous Pageant's mighty Frame support,  
 Num'rous and vast is the Resort

That throng her wide Imaginary Court.  
 As far as e'er her friendly Beams extend,  
 Rang'd in their differing Stations they attend,  
 All near, or distant, dart a longing Eye

On this Lov'd flattering Deity.  
 Beyond the reach of whose enlivening day,  
 Beyond the Influence of one kind Ray,  
 Despair in tatter'd sable Weeds Array'd,  
 Lurks with a gasty Troop within the baneful Shade.

## VIII.

Hark! hark! methinks her melting Voice I hear,  
 Her Voice, that's softer far

Than happy Lovers Billing Whispers are!

Gently methinks the Goddess Chides

My causeless fond Despair,

While *Dolito* lives, who never Wretch deny'd

That on his bounteous Nature yet rely'd,

And spight of the effects of black Ingratitude

To damp the gen'rous Flame,

Bounty and he are to the same;

To imploring Want he must, nay will do Good,

Let *Galba* Laugh, Eat, Drink and Whore,

And in that thoughtless Circle spend his Store,

And when he's Dead, be never thought on more.

So let him die like other Sots and Brutes,

Oblivion best a Life like *Galba's* suits.

But



But since a more Heroic Fire  
 Does wiser *Pollio's* Breast inspire,  
 And moves him to Dispense  
 To drooping Poesie a kind Influence;  
 Let him but cast one Smile on me,  
 By which from *Anxious* Cares set free,  
 In Verse *Immortal* I'd convey his Name,  
 To the last *Boundaries* of Fame,  
 And late Posterity shou'd see him sit  
 Among the *Sacred Patrons* of *Almighty* Wit;  
 For of their Patrons, Poets have these Odds,  
 They Poets make, but Poets make them Gods;  
 To *Mortal* Glory, give *Eternal* Date,  
 And rescue *Merit* from destructive Fate.

By this last Stanza, my dear *Urania*, you find  
 what I then thought of *Pollio*, but I must tell  
 you, my opinion is much alter'd by his Carriage  
 since. Not because he comply'd not with my  
 Desires, but because he has not dealt like a Gen-  
 tleman by me. If *Ostentation* be the Motive of  
 his great Actions, and a present *Fain* Glory be the  
 mover of his Liberality, he has a great many of  
 his Rank, that carry a mighty Name in the  
 World; for few have learned this noble Maxim,  
 that *Virtue* is its own Reward. And yet methinks  
 the present Applause of Fools should not be grate-  
 ful to a Man of Sense. But if *Pollio* had not  
 that Nobleness of Spirit to do a private Good,  
 yet methinks he should not submit to do a *base*  
*thing*, as you know some of his Demeanour to  
 me

me was, especially in detaining what was trusted to his *Versue*, without doing what was expected from that *Trust*. But I'll confine you no longer, *Urania*, to my Complaints, who am

Your faithful Friend,

Viridomar.

## Of the MOON.

*The History of the Temple of Diana at Ephesus, &c. In a Letter to my Learned and Ingenious Friend, Dr. Midgly.*

I Have lately been looking over again Bishop Wilkins his *World in the Moon*, and cannot but agree with him, as I formerly did, that 'tis most reasonable to think that Planet capable of Inhabitants, since we know 'tis a Solid Opacous Body; that the Light it has, is only Borrow'd; and since the Discoveries made by the Telescope of *Galileus*, shew that 'tis every way qualify'd for an Inhabitable World. But whether the Inhabitants be so much Wiser than us, as *Cyrano Bergerai* makes 'em, I can't tell, neither am I willing to allow them that Advantage,

vantage, since their Planet has such a dependance on our Earth, as to be oblig'd to move round us, as its Centre. I should rather agree with *Aristo*, that makes it the *Lumber House*, or *Repository* of all things that are lost in this Earth of ours, even to the *Wits* of his *Hero Orlando*, Bottl'd up in Bottles, like the *Virtuoso's* Air: But then you will answer, if I allow the *Moon* the *Receptacle* of all that is lost on our Earth, that by consequence it must be the *Juster*, *Honester*, as well as *Wiser* Abode, since *Honesty* and *Justice* have long been lost here, as well as *Wisdom*. 'Tis true, Doctor, if the Inhabitants there are one jot the better for 'em, I must yield the Cause; but I hope our *Vertues* as well as *Wits*, are Bottl'd up from their use; else I should wish the Bishop I mention'd but now, had perfected his Discovery, and fix'd a Correspondence betwixt us, for doubtless 'twould yield us abundance of Commodities needful for us, as well as *Wit* and *Honesty*.

However 'tis, methinks we have a greater Image of this friendly moving Light of the Heavens, than the Primitive Poetical Philosophers: They made it but a *Woman*, but we a *World*, that contains perhaps some Millions of finer Women than *Diana*: Tho' 'tis probable not all so Chast, if they are not made of a much different Matter from that of our Earthly Ladies. Tho' I can't blame the Ancients for making it a Woman, from its Inconstancy, which is so natural a Folly of the Sex, that it must be thought *Characteristical*,

*sterifical*: And perhaps the Origin of this Fabulous Lady *Moon*, might be from some *Egyptian Hieroglyphic* of a Woman with a Crescent on her Head, to denote her changable Nature and Affections.

But whence-ever it came, they had Names enough at her Service, above an Hundred in number, too long to insert here. The Poets therefore gave her a Coach too: It was but a Coach and Two; whereas her Brother *Phœbus* had his Coach and Four. *Manilius, lib. 5.*

*Quadrijugis & Phœbus equis, & Delia bigis.*

*Ovid* gives her a pair of White Horses, tho' others differ, and will have her drawn by a Mule, or young Heifers, or Horses of various Colours.

They made her a Huntress, because assisting at the Birth of her Brother *Apollo*, made her hate all Men; for she was so Frighted at the Pains her Mother underwent, that she obtain'd of *Jupiter* ( for nothing but a God could secure a Woman's Maidenhead ) a perpetual Virginity, as *Callimachus* tells us. And *Cicero* in his *Natura Deorum, lib. 2.* says she was Feign'd to assist at the Birth of her Brother *Apollo*, tho' Born at the same Birth, because she came into the World before him. *Jupiter* therefore according to the same *Callimachus*, made her Goddess of *Hunting, High-ways* and *Havens*, and bestow'd on her Bow, Arrows and attending Nymphs, as so many Maids of Honour. Hence *Horace*,

*Monti-*



*Montium custos nemorumq; Virgo  
Qua laborantes vero puellas  
Ter vocata audis, adimisq; letho,  
Diva triformis.*

*Callimachus* says, *Diana's* Chariot is drawn by White Hinds. She often chang'd her Habitation, and had need therefore of some Vehicle, for now she was above in the Heavens, now beneath, among the Infernals. Nor is her Figure more certain than her abode, for as a Friend of mine has it,

*Now with a full Orb she the Darknes does Chase ;  
Now like Whores in the Pit, shews but half of her Face.*

In *Athens*, the young Ladies that were so big with Child, that they could not wear their usual Girdle, or Zone, put it off in the Temple of *Diana*, whence she got the Appellation of *Αἰσχρογυναικας*. To her were offered the Zones or Girdles of Women with Child, as the Garlands were to *Venus* at Marriages. This Goddess also presided over Fishers: And the Poets tell us that they us'd to Sacrifice Bullocks to her; but *Horace* Sacrifices a Boar to her, and *Ovid* a white Hind.

She had a most Magnificent Temple at *Ephesus*, famous for its Building, and remarkable for its Destruction; of which *Natalis Comes* gives us this Account. *Habuit Diana celeberrimum omnium Templorum, & Augustissimum Ephesinum, &c.* The most

most Magnificent and Famous of the Temples of Diana was at Ephesus, which was Built by the care and Industry of all Asia, Two hundred and twenty Years under the direction of the Architect Chesi-phron; it was Four hundred and twenty five Feet in Length, and Two hundred and twenty in Breadth; in which were an hundred and twenty seven Columns, erected by as many several Kings; and these Columns or Pillars were wonderful in their Length as well as Beauty, for they were sixty Foot in Height; thirty six of which were very Noble, and with incredible Art Carv'd with their several Chapters answerable to the Magnificence of the Pillars. Besides which, there were an abundance of exquisite Pictures and admirable Images or Statues, correspondent to the Grandeur and Magnificence of the Temple: All which Herostratus an Ephesian, set on Fire and Destroyed, to purchase to himself perpetuity of Name, since he cou'd not effect it by his Vertues or Parts. This Combustion of Diana's Temple happen'd about the Ides of August, on the day that Alexander the Great, King of Macedon was Born, as Plutarch says in the Life of that Prince. But the Ephesians made a Law, that none should mention the Name of Herostratus for the future, under the most severe Penalties, so to deprive him of the enjoyment of that which he aimed at the obtaining of by so great a Villainy. Thus far Natalis. A Description of the Ruins of this Temple, and all the Cautions us'd by the Founders of it against Earthquakes and other Expected Causes of Ruin, Pliny gives us in his Natural History.

Among

Among other Fables of her, the Poets make her in Love with *Endymion* sleeping on *Latmia*, a Mountain of *Caria*, and that she Enjoy'd him according to *Catullus*.

*Ut triviam furim sub Latmia saxa relegens  
Dulcis amor gyro devovet aërio.*

So weak was the Power of a God to keep her a Maid! Nay, they make her very Fruitful too, for besides Sons by this Amour with *Endymion*, they give her fifty Daughters.

Where three Ways meet, the Ancients us'd to perform the Rites of *Hecate*, who is call'd by three several Names, *Luna*, *Artemis* and *Hecate*. About the New of the Moon, the Richer sort us'd to send a Collation to those Places where three ways met, in the Evening, as a Supper for *Hecate*; but the Poor us'd to devour these Nocturnal Junkets of this Goddess, and give out, that she her self had eat them, as the Priests and their Tribe in *Daniel*; tho' indeed these Suppers were but very Parsimonious; so that an ill Supper got the Proverbial Name of a Feast for *Hecate*; for the Poetical Divinity taught that the Ghosts wou'd subsist with very little Nourishment. But that *Hecate* was the same with *Luna*, or *Diana*, is evident from several Places, particularly from *Raphael Regius*, in his Comments on the 7th Book of *Ovid's Metam.*

And

And here I think 'tis time to make an end of this Lunary Essay, lest I be thought to take so much pains about her Goddess-ship for the Influence she has on me. I wou'd not incur the Imputation of a Madman for her sake, whatever I might for the sake of some Earthly *Cynthia*, perhaps fully as Inconstant; and might deserve a greater variety of Names from her numerous Follies, than *Didus* from the several Places of her Worship. But whatever Influence the Ethereal or Terrestrial *Cynthia's* may have on me, I'm confident, that neither they, nor any other Cause can be Powerful enough to turn me to any thing that should diminish my Value and Esteem for you, or the pleasure I take in being what I shall ever Subscribe my self,

S I R,

*Your Obliged and faithful*

*Friend and Humble Servant,*

Charles Gildon.

*An*



*An ESSAY at a Vindication of the  
Love-Verses of Cowley and Wal-  
ler, &c. In Answer to the Preface  
of a Book Intituled, Letters and  
Verses Amorous and Gallant.*

Directed to

Mr. CONGREVE.

**A**S in my two former Critical Discourses of  
this Book against Mr. Rymer's *Short  
view of Tragedy*, a Zeal for the Honour of  
my Country in its greatest Ornaments, her  
Poets, Engag'd me; so here I cannot help chal-  
lenging the same Pretence, since I can't suppose  
them deficient in *LOVE*, without derogating from  
the *Justness* of their Characters. But I must con-  
fess I have not the same hopes of Success in this;  
for there I had to do with an *impotent Opiniator*;  
but here with a Gentleman of a great deal of  
*Wit* and fine *Sense*. There I address'd to Par-  
ties already sensible of the Justice of my Cause;  
here to one who is prepossess'd of the contrary.  
But on the other hand I have the greater satis-  
faction here of being Worst'd by one whose  
*Wit* can better defend an *Error*, than I the *Truth*;  
and I'm of Opinion, that 'tis a nobler Fate to  
fall by the Hand of an Hero, than Conquer a  
*Dastard Pretender*. And tho' my Prudence might

be call'd in Question by this Attempt, yet my generous Ambition will merit a *Magnis tamen excidit Ausis*. One thing I must possess you of in my favour, that my unhappy Circumstances allow me not time to use all the Caution I ought, or search all the Reasons might be urg'd in this noble Cause ; so that I am not only *Viribus*, but *Opibus impar*: However, I hope the Design will gain me the Opinion of a *Good English Man*, if my Performance shou'd not attain that of a *good Critic*, which will sufficiently compensate my trouble; for I shou'd be prouder to be thought a Zealot for the Glory as well as Interest of my Country, than the greatest Wit, and most Learned Arguer.

I shall never deny the Ancients their just Praise of the Invention of *Arts and Sciences* ; but I cannot without contradicting my own Reason, allow them the Perfecters of 'em so far that they must be our uncontroverted Patterns and Standard: For our Physicians have found the Prescripts of *Hippocrates* very Defective: And as in Physic, so in Poetry, there must be a regard had to the Clime, Nature, and Customs of the People ; for the Habits of the Mind as well as those of the Body, are influenc'd by them ; and *Love* with the other Passions vary in their *Effects* as well as *Causes*, according to each Country and Age ; nay, according to the very Constitution of each Person affected. This makes me hope, that the Ingenious Author of the *Letters and Verses Amorous and Gallant*, guides himself by a fallacious Rule, when he makes the Ancients the Standard of the Excellence of the Moderns

derns ( or indeed when by exalting *those*, he wholly deprives *these* of all Honour ) in *Love Verses*. His Charge is reducible to these two Heads, *viz.* The *Occasions* and the *Performances*. He will have it, that the *Occasions* on which their Poems are written are sought out, and that none meet with 'em but themselves, whilst those of the *Ancients* are such as happen almost to e'ry Man in Love. Next, That the *Verses* of the *Moderns*, are fill'd with *Thoughts* that are indeed *Surprizing* and *Glittering*, but not *Tender*, *Passionate*, or *Natural* for e'ry Man in Love to think. This is the sum of his Charge against 'em; of which in the Order I've plac'd 'em. First, As for the *Occasions*; I cannot remember any Subject chosen by either *Cowly* or *Waller*, ( for we've nothing to do here with *Petrarch* a Foreigner ) that seems to be sought out, or unnatural for a Man in Love to choose; and if some of 'em do not happen to e'ry Man in Love, they are yet on an equal Bottom with the *Ancients*, many of whose *Subjects* or *Occasions*, are far from happening to all Lovers, as none who can pretend to any knowledge of their Writings can deny. *Corinna's* Parrot dy'd, and *Ovid* writes its Funeral Elegy; but sure none will contend that this is an Accident common to all Ladies who have Lovers, and those Poets too. *Catullus* addresses one Copy of Verses to the very Sparrow of *Lesbia*, and in another deploras its Death. A great many Lovers may have Mistresses who never take a Voyage during their Amour, and yet *Ovid* has an Elegy *ad Amicam Navigantem*; and so may ten thousand true Lovers, especially such as are Poets, never venture on

any other Billows, but the Frown of their Fair ones; and yet *Propertius* toss'd in another Storm, Writes to *Cynthia* upon it. And indeed to reduce the *Subjects* or *Occasions* of Love-Poets to any particular Standard, is highly Irrational, and must only be the effect of want of Consideration, for the various Circumstances and Fortunes of the Lovers must diversifie and alter the *Occasions* of writing to their Mistresses: So that there is no Occasion that is General, and that can reach all Men in Love, but the Cruelty of their Mistresses on their first Addresses, (that is, their not immediate Compliance) for Jealousie is not Universal, or at least to extend to the Beating of her a Man Loves; yet *Ovid* Writes *ad Amicam quam verberaverat*. I must confess, I can't see the least Reason why the Name and Gloves of a Mistress, with the Place of her Birth, are not as just Occasions to Write on as the Ring given to a Mistress, or her Parrot or Sparrow; or a great many more I might enumerate out of the Ancients. A true Lover thinks e'ry thing that belongs to her he Loves, worthy his Thoughts; and the more our Modern Poets extend their Reflections beyond the Ancients in this, so much the greater Lovers they shew themselves. But the Place of one's Mistress's Birth is not only worthy a Lover's Thoughts, but even an Universal Occasion, since no Lover but must meet with that Occurrence in whatever fair one he adores, among all the beauteous Daughters of Eve.

By what has been said, Sir, 'tis evident that our Moderns are not inferiour to the Ancients,  
in



In their Judgment in chusing *Occasions* on which they write to their Mistresses: Or, That this Ingenious Gentleman has either through Want of Advertence, or out of Design expressed himself *ambiguously*, or at least not with that *Clearness* that is requisite to a conclusive Argument; which cannot be excused when the Honour and Merit of such great Men as *Cowley* and *Waller* is concerned; nay, the Honour of our Country.

I come now to the Second Accusation, which is, that *the Moderns fill their Verses with Thoughts surprising and glittering, but not natural for e'ry Man in Love to think*. This lies under the same Fault as the other does, of being too general to be of any Force, it either condemns all that the Moderns have wrote, it casts off e'ry Thought in their Love-Verses as not tender and passionate, or does nothing at all, for it instances no particular. I'm confident the ingenious Gentleman will have so much Candor, as to confess that there are a great many very tender and soft Thoughts, and passionate Expressions in *Cowley's Mistress*, as in this one, that now occurs to my Mind: *Then like some wealthy Island thou shalt lie*, &c. but if there be some, nay, a great many tender, soft, and passionate thoughts in our Moderns, then is this general charge not at all conclusive against 'em. Besides, *Thoughts natural to a Man in Love*, is an obscure Expression, it conveys no clear Idea of any thing to the Mind; or, what is fully as erroneous, it seems to level the Thoughts of all Mankind, but it cannot be doubted, but that in the very same

Circumstances the Thoughts of different Men will be various, and more or less Excellent and Noble, as the Wit, Judgment, Fancy, and the other Qualities of the Mind of the Person affected, are more or less Excellent and perfect: And I am confident your ingenious Friend (whom I honour for his Wit, tho I differ from his Opinion) will allow me, That one of Mr. Cowley's Genius wou'd no more have the Thoughts of a Fop, a Beau, a Tinker, a Shepherd, or any other ignorant and *unelevated* Mechanic, in Love, than out of it. *Again*, Thoughts *surprizing*, and *glittering* without particular Instances of 'em, as they prove nothing, so can they not be well answer'd, for an Instance would have made us apprehend what he takes for *surprizing* and *glittering*; but without that, or any Definition, we wander in the dark, and I can at best but only ghes at his meaning. If by *Thoughts surprizing*, and *glittering* he means *extraordinary* and *uncommon*, I'm apt to think he will allow them very natural to Mr. Cowley or Mr. Waller in any Circumstance. A Man that is us'd to a good Habit of thinking, cannot be without extraordinary Thoughts, on what concerns him so near as the Heart of his Mistress. *Lastly*, As to *far-fetch'd Similes*, 'tis an Expression very *obscure* and *ambiguous*; and I must acknowledge my self wholly to seek in his Meaning, if a *Simile* be just, and hold an exact Analogy to the thing 'tis applied to, and of the thing 'tis designed to heighten, I presume it cannot come into the Number of the *far-fetch'd*, and when-ever the Gentleman will please to instance in Particulars in either Cowley or

or *Waller*, I engage to fellow them with those that are full as faulty, even according to his own Definition, let that be what it will, (for I suppose it can't be much amiss from so accurate a Pen.) And till then I may supersede any particular Defence in this. Besides, 'tis not to be supposed, that the Verses written by Lovers are the *Extempore* Result of a sudden Gust of Passion, like the Inspirations of the *Delphic* Prophetess; for I'm confident he'll agree with me that the Excuse of Love will not free a Poet, that lets them pass so from the Censure of *Boileau*

*Un sot en écrivant, fait tout avec plaisir  
 Il n'a point en ses vers l'embarras de Choisir.*

A Poetizing Lover, must be allow'd not to be absolutely out of his Wits, and that 'tis possible for him to study, and consider what he says in so solemn a Manner to his Mistress.

After this bold Assertion without Proof, he advances to examine which are in the right, the Ancients or the Moderns; the Rule of our Judgment in this, he justly makes the End the Poet aims at, viz. *The obtaining the Love of his Mistress*, tho I cannot see why he should suppose that contrary to, or inconsistent with getting *Fame* and *Admiration*, since *Admiration* is a certain Step to Love. When I read Mr. *Dryden's* Works, I cannot help Loving him. If I should not love and respect him and any other Poet that thinks well, and expresses his Thoughts nobly, I should sin against my Reason. *Ovid* urges his Fame and Reputation as a Motive for his Mistress's Love, and if that can move a Man of Sense, why should we think the Effect wou'd

not be the same on a Woman of Sense, and Generosity? And indeed, in e'ry one but an absolute dull, insipid Fool, which no Lover can think his Mistress.

The End of Love-Verses being the gaining the fair ones Heart, he proceeds to the best means of obtaining that End, viz. *The convincing her that you love her.* I must deny this Assertion too, for tho' Love in the Severity of Justice require Love; yet is that an Argument that ought not always to prevail, since 'tis a Plea that's common to a great many, for so the fair one ought to surrender to 'em all; a Liberty no Lover would willingly allow his Mistress on any Consideration whatever. But how often does Experience tell us, that this *best Way* fails? Or indeed, how seldom does it hit? *Admiration* is the only just, and unquestionable Parent of Love; for the Senses or the Mind must be first won with some Perfection, either real or imaginary. Whatever therefore can ravish Fame from the envious censorious World, may justly be suppos'd able to give *Admiration* to a Mistress. Nor is this inconsistent with the *true and lively Representation of the Pains, and Thoughts attending the Passion of Love*; for sure the Advantage of *Art* in Poems cannot destroy the *End* which is not to be obtain'd in Painting without it, viz. a *lively Representation of Nature. Similes, fine Thoughts, and shining Points*, if they be just, and good, must certainly give a greater Idea of any Pain, than a bare and unpolished Rhime, without Beauty or Grace. *This* gives us a *weak, a faint, an unmoving View* of the Pain; *That* sets it close to us, magnifies



magnifies and enlarges it : *This* gives it you as the reverse end of a Prospective Glass does Objects, *That* as the right end of it ; so that if a Representation of our Pain be the Path to Success, *Art* will be no ill Help and guide in it ; unless we'll suppose that our Mistress would be more sensibly touched with a *Grubstreet* Ballad, than a Copy of Verses by a *Cowley* or a *Waller*. But indeed, the Pain a Lover feels cannot be truly, and with Life represented without *Similes*, as is evident from the very Nature of the Mind, when in Pain : For 'tis an universal Measure of our Judgment of things to compare them with something else ; and the Mind in expressing its Pains endeavours to make it known in its full Greatness : to give therefore the greater Image of it, it generally seeks out something by a Comparison of which it hopes to obtain that End ; Comparison being the only Distinction of Degrees of things. This makes it narrowly in these Circumstances, regard and observe that Train of *Ideas* that continually pass before it, to call out such as are most proper for its purpose : For 'tis evident, (as Mr. Lock remarks) to any one that will but observe what passes in his own Mind, that there is a Train of *Ideas* constantly succeeding one another in his Understanding, as long as he's awake. An Assertion therefore of an Ingenious Friend of mine, to the Prejudice of the Moderns, against *Similes* in the Expression of the Passions of Love and Grief, is contrary to the very Nature of the Mind. For let any Man endeavour to retain any particular Idea firmly and without Alteration, he will find it not in his Power to do it any considerable time,

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such a necessary Succession and Variation of Ideas (the Origin of Similes) is there in the human Mind. But because 'tis said that *'tis the nature of Grief to confine the Soul, straiten the Imagination, and extremely lessen the Number of its Objects*, I shall only oppose the Assertion of this Gentleman (whom I have always allow'd a Man of great Wit and Sense) with an Observation of Mr. *Le Clerk*, (whom I'm sure no Man that knows his Works, will deny to be one of the best Philosophers of the Age) in the 6th. Chapter of his *Ontologie* and the 4th. Paragraph, he has to this purpose—"This being so, we observe that the time seems short to those who spend it in Mirth, or any Employment they perform with Pleasure and Desire; but on the contrary, Tedious and Irksome to the Unfortunate, and those that are in Pain, or to those that are against their Wills, oblig'd to some troublesome Business. For we keep the Idea that is Gratefull and Pleasant to us, as long without Variation as we are able, and thus by the viewing of the fewer Ideas, the time we spend in Pleasure and Content, seems the shorter; whilst on the contrary, our Minds endeavour to drive away a troublesome Idea, and strive to substitute some others in its room; Turning, Winding, Changing, Adding and Diminishing it, as the uneasy inquietude Prompts. Thus the time seems longer than it wou'd do else, by that vast and numerous Train of Ideas, which, as I may say, shew themselves *en passant* to the Mind, with an incredible Rapidity and Swiftness. From this just and rational Observation of

of Mr. *Le Clerk* 'tis evident, That *Similes* are not so unnatural in expression of Grief or Pain, as some Ingenious Gentlemen contend : For the Mind (especially that which is us'd to an Expression of its self in Allegory and *Similes*) will easily in this Number of Ideas, meet with some that will answer the End, the Mind is born to with so much Impatience and Desire : For 'tis here also evident, That Grief multiplies nor lessens the Number of the Objects of the Mind.

From what has been said 'twill appear, That *Similes* cannot be an unnatural Expression of this Passion, or any Effects of it, I shall therefore proceed to those few particular Instances the Author of the *Preface* gives, by which he draws a short Parallel betwixt the Ancients and the Moderns. *I am pleas'd*, says he, *with Tibullus*, *when he says, he cou'd live in a Desert with his Mistress, where never any Humane Foot-steps appear'd, because I doubt not but he really thinks what he says : But I confess, I can hardly forbear Laughing, when Petrarch tells us he cou'd live without any other Sustainance than his Mistresses Looks.* I confess, I must ev'n here dissent from him too; for if you go to the Rigor or Severity of the Reason of both Expressions, they are equally impossible, and in Impossibilities as well as Infinites, there are no Degrees. For I can see no greater Probability of Living in a Desert where there were no Humane Foot-steps, than on the Looks of a Mistress only; unless like *Nebuchadnezzar*, he wou'd feed on the Leaves of the Trees, and Grass of the Ground if there were any; which is not very kind to hope his Mistress wou'd comply with. But sup-

posing

posing it impossible, is there any Necessity of a Lovers saying nothing that exceeds the Bounds of Possibility? especially in Poetry, where Hyperbole's are justifiable almost to Extravagance. That certainly wou'd be most unnatural of all, for the Thoughts of a Man really in Love, are naturally Extravagant ev'n to Impossibilities; tho *possunt quia posse videntur*. The very Definition of this Passion in Ethics, shews it violent and exorbitant. But we may in favour of *Petrarch* and *Mr. Cowley*, (who make use of the same Thought) say that they mean the Dyet of their Love, is a Look of their Mistress.

I must confess, I'm extremely surpriz'd to find your Ingenious Friend an Advocate for that which wou'd make all the *Sir Courtly's* Compositions of the *Nation*, the Standard of good Verses; when he himself is really so well qualify'd to write like *Cowley* and *Waller*, and has by his own Practice in those Verses that are Publish'd, better confuted his Preface, than all I can pretend to say.

*To my Honour'd and Ingenious Friend  
Mr. Harrington, for the Modern  
Poets against the Ancients.*

AS the Justice and Generosity of your Principle, the sweet Agreeableness of your Humour, the Vivacity of your Wit, and the strength and force of your Judgment and Penetration, justly endear you to all your Acquaintance, so they  
qualify



qualify you for a Judge of the present Controversie betwixt the Moderns and the Ancients, for the Prize of Glory in Learning and Poetry. Monsieur *Perault* (whom I have not yet had the Opportunity to Read) has given it to the Moderns, *Rapin* to the Ancients: Mr. *Rymer* has with abundance of Indignation appear'd on *Rapin's* side. I cannot determine whether Mr. *Perault* has been too partial to his own Country-men, (an Error on the right side) but I'm sure Mr. *Rymer* has been extremely injurious to his; which has made me perhaps, too angry with him in my former Discourses. But I assure my self that you are too good an *Englishman*, to let Friendship to any Man, bribe you to condemn those rough Effects of my Zeal for the *English Nation*. I will be more just than my Adversary, I will yield that *Greece* had Great Poets, notwithstanding all those monstrous Faults and Absurdities they abound with; tho he will not allow the *English* any Honour, because they have been guilty of Errors. Nay, I'll say more, that the Poetry of *Greece* was her most valuable Learning, for that still maintains its Share of Glory and Esteem, whilst her Philosophy is now exploded by the Universal Reason of Mankind. *Homer*, *Pindar*, *Sophocles* and *Euripides*, will, as long as they are understood, preserve their Characters of Excellent Poets, tho the *Stagyrite* with all his Volumes, is now shrunk from his Ostentatious Title of the *Philosopher*, to that of a good *Critic*, or *Grammarian*.

Tho I grant the *Gracians* this, yet I cannot subscribe to the rest of the Hyperbolical Praises some of our Modern Critics give them. For I confess,

I can discover no such *Universal Genius* in *Homer*, as they contend for, as that all Arts and Sciences may be learn'd from him: *Virgil* seems to me, more generally Learned by far; and Mr. *Cowley* among our *English* Poets, may without Partiality, be put up for his Rival in the Glory of Learning. As for the *Numbers* of *Homer*, *Rapin* vastly extols their Variety, and yet confesses that to be the Property of the *Greek* Language, which makes it the easier Task for *Homer* to perform, and by consequence, lessens his Merit on that Account. But it cannot be deny'd that *Virgil* has as much Variety in this as the *Roman* Language wou'd allow; and as was necessary for the Beauty of his Poem; and they are in his Descriptions especially, so well chosen, that they extremely contribute to the Image of the thing describ'd; as *Gemitus dedere Cavernæ: præruptus aquæ Mons*. The sound of the first makes us as it were hear the hollow noise the Spear of *Lyacoon* made in the *Trojan* Horse; the other Places in our View such a watry Mountain. Among our *English* Poets, none can compare with Mr. *Dryden* for Numbers: His Descriptions are all very perfect in all things; but his Numbers contribute not a little to the force and life of the Representation, for they carry something in them distinct from the Expression and Thought; as in his Description of Night, 'What an Image of a profound Stillness does this following Verse set before us,

*The Mountains seem to Nod their drowsie Heads!*

I have not room nor leisure at this time to make a thorough parallel betwixt the *Ancients* and

and the *Moderns*, and shall only cursorily run over the Heads. I have touch'd the *Universality of Genius*, and the *variety of Numbers* (this last being the Prerogative of the Language more than of the Poets.) *Judgment* I think is apparently the due of the *Moderns*, who I'm confident wou'd ne'er have been guilty of those Absurdities the Ancients abound with. They seem to have been Masters of but little Reason, when they made their Gods such *limited* and *criminal Beings*, *Homer* often digresses from the *Hero*, that is the Subject of his Poem, to entertain us with other Objects too remote from *Achilles*. You may, Sir, easily perceive that I press not so hard as I might on the *Ancients*; that I omit abundance of *Improprieties*, and *Absurdities*, ridiculous even to *Childishness*, because I wou'd not be thought to rob the *Faibers* of Poetry of their just Value and Esteem; tho I confess I am of Mr. St. *Euromont's* Opinion, that no Name can Privilege Nonsense or ill Conduct.

The Enemies of the *Moderns* will not deal so Civilly with them. They deny them to be Poets because they have not strictly observed the Rules laid down by *Aristotle*, but by that they discover themselves either ignorant or negligent of the most chief and important end of Poetry, that is, Pleasure. Now, it cannot be deny'd but he is the best Poet who takes the surest means to obtain the end he aims at; in which, regard must be had to the *Humour*, *Custom*, and *Inclination* of the Auditory; but an *English Audience* will never be pleas'd with a dry, that Jeune and formal Method excludes Variety as the Religious observation of the Rules of *Aristotle* does. And all those that exclaim against the

Liberty

ty some of our *English* Poets have taken, must grant that a *Variety* that contributes to the main Design, cannot divide our Concern: And if so, 'tis certainly an *Excellence* the *Moderns* have gain'd above the *Ancients*. This wou'd appear plainer if I had room and time to instance in Particulars. The Plays Mr. *Dryden* has bless'd the Age with will prove this; which if compar'd (as I hereafter intend) with those of *Sophocles* and *Euripides*, either for the Plot, Thought, or Expression, will gain him the Poets Garland from those two Hero's of Old *Greece*.

The *Plagiarism* objected to our Poets is common to the *Ancients* too; for *Virgil* took from *Homer*, *Theocritus*, and ev'n *Ennius*; and we are assur'd *Homer* himself built upon some Predecessors: And tho' their thoughts may be something a-kin, yet they alter their Dress, and in all other things we are satisfied with the *variety* of the outward visible Form, tho' the intrinsic value be the same, as Mr. *Congreve's* Song has it, *Nothing new besides their Faces, e'ry Woman is the same*. In all things as well as Women the meer Variety of Appearance, whets our Desire and Curiosity. I am,

S I R,

Your Humble Servant,

Charles Gildon.



TO THE  
HONOURABLE  
GEORGE GRANVIL Esq;

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*An Essay at a parallel betwixt Philosophy, and the Love of Women.*

**T**HO' I confess *Horace* has generally a very just *Apprehension* of Things, yet can I never agree with him in his notions of *Happiness*. *Lib. 1. Epist. 6.*

*Nil admirari prope res est una Numici  
Solæ; quæ possit facere, & servare Beatum.*

for 'tis certain, that *Happiness* consists in *Pleasure*, but there can be no *Pleasure*, without a *Gentle* and agreeable *Emotion* of the *Passion* of *Admiration*, the *Ground* of *Love* and *Joy*, out of which all *Pleasure* is compos'd. As an instance of this *Truth*, it must be granted, that as *Virtue* is the chief *Basis* of *Humane Happiness*, so 'twill never be embrac'd by any *Man*, that does not admire

and

and esteem its *Excellence*. And in the same manner, the other parts of *Philosophy* lead us to *Pleasure*, by *Admiration*. For what pleasure is there in *Physics*, which proceed not from that agreeable Wonder given us, by the strange and surprising Variety, and force, we find in the Nature of corporeal Things? What Pleasure does *Metaphysics* afford, that is not built on our *Esteem*? (and *Esteem* is the only part of *Admiration* that contributes to Pleasure; for there's a Pain attends despising, which is the other Division of it,) what Pleasure I say have we in this study, but what is built on our *Esteem* of the valuable *Certainty* it furnishes us with in whatever it proposes? For there is nothing more sure than *Abstract Ideas*, the subject of *Ontology* or *Metaphysics*. Again in *Pneumatology*, does not the Contemplation of the Purger, and Superior Beings, to the very Supreme, and first cause of all that Exists, fill our Souls with excessive and amazing Delight and Wonder? Lastly, what Pleasure is there in *Woman*, that lost summary of Man's Happiness, which derives not its self from *Admiration*? *Admiration*, therefore is so far from being an Enemy to, that it is the very foundation of our *Happiness*, whether we consider it in the *Direction*, or *Aim* and *End* of our *Life*, that is in *Philosophy* or *Woman*.

Some Sir, may perhaps think I have made a very strange mixture, in joining *Philosophy* and *Woman*; tho' I'm confident, so much Wit, Youth, and all those other Accomplishments of a fine Gentleman, that render you the darling  
of

of both Sexes, will not let you think I have degraded *Philosophy* in it, which will appear from a short parallel drawn betwixt them.

*Philosophy* is either employed in the Consideration of *Bodys*, as in *Physicks*, of *Beings* in general, or *Abstract Ideas*, as in *Metaphysics* or *Ontology*; or of *Pure and Immaterial Essences*, as the *Souls*, *Angels*, *God*, as in *Pneumatology*, or lastly of *Vertue* as in *Ethicks*.

*First*, the Business of *Physicks* is extremely uncertain, for there the Mind is employed about very *Obscure Ideas*; and though some of our Experiments, often present us with certain Effects, yet does it not always discover the absolute certainty of the Cause, nor shall we ever be able to penetrate into the inmost Nature, or all the qualities of Matter, and till then we must be in the dark, as to the true Causes; so that *Physicks* put us upon the chase of what we have very little probability of obtaining. On the other Hand, the *Lobe of Woman* is more certain in obtaining as well as more noble in its End, viz. a perfect Enjoyment of, and a close Union with the Object desir'd, the effect of which ends not with them, but is perpetuated by their Off-Spring, who are a part of 'em, the admirable and certain Effect, of a known Charming, and Generous Cause.

*Secondly, Metaphysics* amuses us with meer *Abstract Ideas*, whilst the *Love of Woman*, purs us in a sensible Possession of a *Real, not Ideal Abstract* of all the Beautys and Perfections of every *Being* on this side of the *Eternal*. The Contem-  
 plation of whom, with the Created Spirits makes up *Pneumatology*; but we wander in too uncertain a Path, in our Contemplation of these latter, to arrive at satisfaction; for *Fancy* there directs our Steps more, than *Judgment* built on *Right Reason*, and *Evidence*. And therefore that part cannot be comparable to that of the *Love of Woman*, which gives us by the most prevailing way, the *Senses*, a proof of the Existence of Spirits, if not distinct from, yet of a purer Make, than even the refin'd Body of Woman; for what *Lover* is there that does not feel, perfectly feel some unseen Spirits darted from the bright Eyes of the fair one he adores, which have a sensible influence on him, tho' he touch her not; and these are Spirits that cheer, not shock our Natures, as those other *Fantoms* do.

Then for the Contemplation of the *Supream Being*, the best Philosophers form an Idea of him by his *Wondrous Works*, of which what can give a fairer Image of him, than *Woman*, the most Beautiful, Good, and Compassionate being of the Universe? Which made *St. Austin* compare God to a fine Woman viewing her own Perfection in a Glass. 'Tis true, that the Admirable Order, and Oeconomy of the *Celestial Bodys*, their Glory and



and Light discover apparent Foot steps of the Eternal Mind: these shew us a powerful and a wise *Being*, but nothing has a share of his best attribute of Goodness, but the best part of Man, *Woman*, his own Image. Besides, the Consideration of the Universe is as I may say a voluminous Introduction to the Contemplation of that *Being*: we are forc'd there to run through objects distinct, and various in their Forms and Beauty, as well as vastly distant in their situation, which all contributes to the Confusion and Imperfection of the Image they present of the *Power* and *Wisdom* of God; and the Administration of Humane Affairs is a too tedious, as well as a too controverted argument of his Goodness. But *Woman* gives us at once a Beautiful and more Compendious prospect of his *Power*, *Wisdom* and *Goodness*; for as *Pliny* says, never are the works of Nature so admirable as in small things, and *Woman* is the Minature draught of all his Attributes that are communicable to his Creatures; for in one *female Woman* we may read the legible Characters of an Almighty Hand. From whom also had I time and room, I cou'd draw the knowledge of the Moral Attributes of the first Cause.

Lastly, *Ethics* teach us the Rules and Prescripts of *Virtue*, to secure us from those Inquietudes, the Criminal and Vicious Experience; but this is only subservient to, and prepares us for the enjoyment of *Woman*, in a more perfect Degree; for it contracts and calls home all our *Wandering Wishes* and

and our *loose Desires*, and directs them all to one Object, which like the Sun-beams contracted into a burning Glass, must be of far greater Force, and by consequence, give a greater and more exalted Relish of *Delight*, than when scatter'd and dissipated.

But *Ethics* only informs the Mind with a bare knowledge of *Virtue*, without having power to influence us to the embracing of it, for there are a great many that with *Medea* in *Ovid* may say,

*—Vide meliora probos;  
Dulcora sequor—*

but *Woman* can effect what Philosophy is impotent in; for whilst that proposes the meer unactive Theory, the Love of *Woman* reduces it to Practice, for when that is necessary to please her a Man loves, all the Facultys of the Soul unite to effect the noble Work.

I had told you whom I call'd to to *Tis* methinks such an Arraignment of the first Cause to run down that Sex, which Heaven has made choice of to impart to so large a share, in giving Immortality to Human Race by the propagation of our kind, that they deserve not to taste that Pleasure that is join'd to so mighty a work. The greatest Pleasure in the noblest Act, with the dominion of *Creation* *Woman*.

But

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But whether *Philosophy* or *Woman* have the right of *Precedence*, 'tis certain they both afford us a *Noble and agreeable Pleasure*, without one or both, of which we can never be truly happy. But yet by the *Nil admirari* of *Horace*, they are thrown aside; for the cutting off *Admiration*, deprives us of all Pleasure in either, that in both being built on *Admiration*. And indeed, this passage seems to aim at a *Stupid*, and *Pyrrhonian Indifference*, or *Indisturbance* and *Insensibility*, which can no more be arriv'd at, than 'tis to be desir'd.

But perhaps I mistake the sense of *Horace*, who it may be is only against that variable and wavering *Admiration*, that is the Mother of Ten Thousand fruitless Inquietudes and Troubles, by generating too numerous a Progeny of restless Desires for every object that presents it self. This I confess is so far an Enemy to *Happiness*, as 'tis to *Constancy* and *Resolution* its safe-guard, and which are so eminently conspicuous in your

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F I N I S.

The whole of the History of the World is a  
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 a. in the tenth place, the tenth of the

# ERRATA.

**P**age 17. Line 3. read thus. p. 18. l. 14. r. *his*. p. 36.  
 l. 8. dele *the* ad. *that*. p. 37. l. penult. r. *tho'*. p. 41. l.  
 11. r. *purpose*. p. 43. l. 1. r. *he does*. l. 3. add *rashly or ma-*  
*liciously*. p. 44. l. 5. r. *Yours*, &c. l. 1. p. 45. l. 10. r. *his*.  
 p. 46. l. 27. r. *was*. p. 47. l. 2. r. *and*. p. 50. l. 13. add *the*  
 p. 54. l. 6. r. *containing*. p. 55. l. 17. dele *II*. p. 66. l. 11. r.  
*formally*. p. 72. l. 3. r. *an*. p. 83. r. *Reputation*. p. 84. l. 1.  
 r. *can*. p. 110. l. 9. r. *so*. p. 197. l. 8. r. *Floods*. p. 198. l.  
 5. r. *whom*. p. 125. l. 9. r. *Wretch*.

There are many false Points and Comma's, and some Faults  
 not here mentioned, which the Reader is desir'd to excuse  
 and correct.



